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THE AMERICAN Prospect

LIBERAL INTELLIGENCE

OCTOBER 2005

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A Great American

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A Transformative
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THE AMERICAN Prospect

LIBERAL INTELLIGENCE

*"What's the use of a house if you
haven't got a tolerable planet to
put it on?"*

— HENRY DAVID THOREAU

DISPATCHES

- 11 **Withdrawal Pains** *by Matthew Yglesias*
With his plan for pulling out of Iraq, Russ Feingold opened a new phase in the Democrats' debate. It just hasn't been much of a debate yet.
- 12 **Coast to Coast** *by Harold Meyerson*
The big state showdowns this fall: Virginia's heated gubernatorial race and Ahnold's ballot initiatives. Nonvoters (i.e., kids) loom large in both.
- 15 **Labor Gains?** *by Jim Grossfeld*
Some good news for a change: Larry Cohen takes over at the cwa, one of the few unions that has adapted to the postindustrial economy.

FEATURES

- 18 **The Faithless Fifteen** *by Robert Kuttner and Asheesh Siddique*
Some House Democrats have to vote with Bush sometimes. But many who do don't have to—and they lead our dishonor roll of sellout Democrats.
- 23 **A Perfect Storm?** *By Michael Tomasky*
Is Katrina a transformative political moment? Only if the Democrats can make the case that the Bush failures were the inevitable result of ideology.
- 27 **They're Ba-ack** *by Joe Conason*
The Social Security privatizers never went away. They were just in hiding for the summer. And the lessons of Round One are worth bearing in mind.
- 32 **The Neocon Who Isn't** *by Robert S. Boynton*
Francis Fukuyama literally helped invent foreign-policy neoconservatism. But last year, he broke with his comrades—and voted for Kerry. *What?*
- 37 **State of the State** *by Jo-Ann Mort*
The Israeli left championed Gaza withdrawal before anyone. But now that it's happened, the credit is all Sharon's. And the left has a long climb back.

SPECIAL REPORT

- A1 **Toward a Greener Politics** A year ago, an essay proclaiming "the death of environmentalism" caused a furor in the movement and beyond. But the critique of environmentalists could be leveled more broadly against progressive failures on many fronts. How can progressive coalitions—of environmentalists and others—surmount the blockage in Washington? With articles by *Ross Gelbspan, Bill McKibben, Carl Pope, Adam Werbach, Jan Schakowsky, Michael Shellenberger* and *Ted Nordhaus*, and others.

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 **Correspondence**
- 6 **Devil in the Details:** John Bolton, the William Shawn of Turtle Bay; Katrina and the bankruptcy bill; the blogs love Wes Clark; but why?; plus Slowpoke Comics by Jen Sorensen

COLUMNS

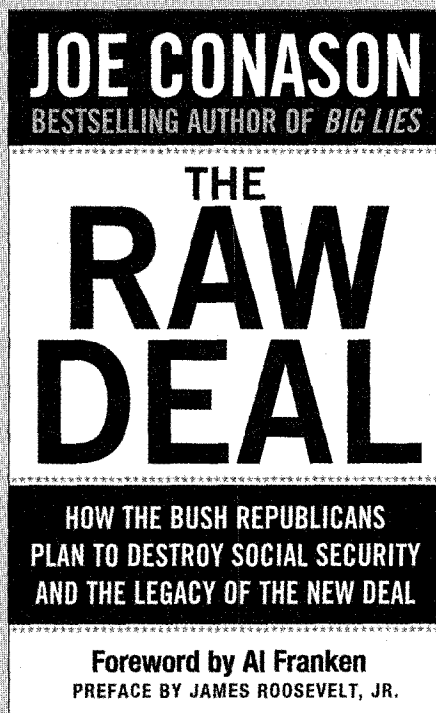
- 3 **Prospects:** Leadership, Please *by Robert Kuttner*
- 17 **The Taxonomist:** Tax Follies at *TNR* *by Robert S. McIntyre*
- 48 **The Last Word:** The Paradox Explained *by Robert B. Reich*

CULTURE & BOOKS

- 41 **FILM:** See It Again *by J. Hoberman*
George Clooney's *Good Night, and Good Luck* puts Murrow's take-down of McCarthy in perfect focus.
- 43 **BOOKS:** *Laura D'Andrea Tyson* on the two futures of globalization, as told by Clyde Prestowitz and Martin Wolf; *David Greenberg* on the two pasts of post-Watergate America, as told by Godfrey Hodgson and James T. Patterson

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Leadership, Please

GEORGE W. BUSH'S CYNICISM AND INCOMPETENCE have come back to haunt him, earlier than might have been predicted. As a result, history has dealt Democrats an opportunity. Whether they will rise to the occasion remains to be seen.

Michael Tomasky addresses the politics of the New Orleans catastrophe elsewhere in this issue. Although Hurricane Katrina has knocked the Iraq debacle off the front pages, American public opinion continues to desert President Bush on the war. Recent polls show that Americans disapprove of Bush's handling of Iraq by 60 percent to 36 percent. And a majority believes that we are losing ground there, and that the war was a mistake. The president's general approval ratings are at a rock-bottom 38 percent, about the hard-core Republican voting base.

But if the Democrats are not careful, leading Republican critics of the Bush Iraq policy will end up outflanking Democrats as war critics. Among senior Democrats, only Russ Feingold has had the nerve to call for a phased withdrawal. Other senior Democrats, such as Joe Biden, John Kerry, and Hillary Clinton, have staked out a position that criticizes Bush but makes incremental suggestions of how to fight Bush's war more efficiently. Some of these would even lead to commitments of more troops, not fewer.

But leadership requires setting out real alternatives. In the meantime, Republican Senators Chuck Hagel and Richard Lugar are becoming more outspoken on Iraq than many Democrats, reflecting growing opposition to the war among Republican officials and voters. Remember that it was Bush, as a candidate, who pleased his base by warning against "nation building," and that Colin Powell, his first secretary of

state, enunciated the Powell doctrine (while serving Bush I)—namely that the United States should avoid getting entangled in wars that it couldn't decisively win. Traditional Republicans, mostly, are not a recklessly adventurist group.

Senator John McCain has also led on trying to change the administration's incredible prisoner-of-war policy so that the official U.S. position no longer officially embraces "cruel, degrading, and inhumane" treatment of detainees being interrogated. This policy was devised by then-White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales, whom the far right is disparaging as too moderate for the Supreme Court. McCain, in an amendment co-sponsored by Hagel and fellow Republican Lindsey Graham, would subject all interrogations to the rules of the U.S. Army field manual, which specifically prohibits inhumane treatment.

Future historians will debate how a few neocons managed to hijack Bush's foreign policy. But there was, and is, a large wing of the Republican Party that resists neocon grandiosity, and nothing fails like failure.

The late Allard Lowenstein spoke at Columbia University in 1967 on Vietnam. When a questioner noted that no mainstream politician supported withdrawal,

Lowenstein quoted the famous line of the 19th-century French politician Alexandre-Auguste Ledru-Rollin: "There go my people! I must find out where they are going so I can lead them!" If public opinion came around, a leader would emerge. And with Lowenstein's coaxing, Eugene McCarthy soon did emerge, reinforcing public dissent and triggering events that led to Lyndon Johnson standing down.

Today, ordinary public opinion is leading elite opinion. If the Iraq War is still dragging on two years from now with Bush and the neocons discredited, either party could emerge as the peace party in 2008. Ordinarily, peace candidates get trounced, but 2008 could reveal a very different public psychology.

DEMOCRATS' METTLE WILL ALSO BE tested by the second Supreme Court vacancy. Democrats may be fortunate that Bush chose to elevate John Roberts to fill the seat of the late chief justice. Roberts, by most accounts, is no worse than William Rehnquist. As we go to press, it appears that he will be confirmed handily, barring unforeseen revelations. But a battle royal should be waged to fill the swing seat of Sandra Day O'Connor.

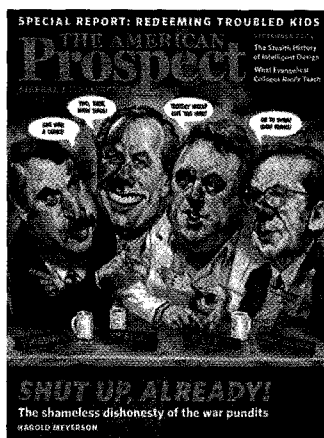
With Bush weakened by both Katrina and Iraq, Democrats have every reason to set the bar higher. The country is narrowly divided politically. In any normal time, this would produce a centrist president, but Bush has grabbed the levers of power and is determined to move America far to the right of its people.

Only on the Supreme Court will Bush's legacy last decades beyond the three remaining years of his own fading star.

In a time of terrorism, Americans want leaders. Democrats would do well to filibuster any appointee who is not a true moderate. They would win support for having convictions. And they just might force Bush to appoint a moderate. **TAP**

— ROBERT KUTTNER

*In the Bush era,
credible leadership
requires setting
out real alternatives
and fighting
for them.*



*I await the
first [pro-war]
pundit to have the
moral courage to
retrace his steps.*

— FRANCIS INGLEDUEW
TEANECK, NJ

The War Pundits

HAROLD MEYERSON'S piece on pundits ["Their War, Too," September 2005] is satisfying, though it only scratches the surface of the betrayal of their readers by these particular writers.

More than the welcome focus of the article, though, is its selection of particular words and emphases I appreciate.

Words: "willful" to describe various pundits' mis-seeing, for example. Yes, this seems exactly right. With so much that was out of whack with the entire Iraq undertaking in plain view, I don't know how else to explain so much of what these pundits said.

Emphases: Mr. Meyerson's focus not only on the errors of these pundits but also on their accountability. It's one thing to take the first step and document a poor argument. But what's the point if one doesn't then ask: What follows from this documentation? If it is as Mr. Meyerson says (and even he doesn't say enough), aren't these writers discredited—where "discredited" means "seen to have the bottom drop out of virtually everything you have said"?

And if you're discredited, don't you cease to be a go-to source? If your employers don't see through you, might

remnants of a sense of responsibility kick in, so that you withdraw yourself until you've figured out how you got it so wrong? How do these folks maintain their public profile? We're long past that first sense of shock at seeing a cable-news outlet turn to Judith Miller for the latest on weapons of mass destruction. In such talking heads' continuing credibility, their continuance as pundits, aren't we in the territory of a social pathology?

So I await the first pundit who walked down that particular garden path over Iraq to have the moral courage to retrace his steps so as really to work out how he got there, and to rethink his thinking. Such a person will have something to give the society from which he earlier took so much.

Meanwhile, thanks to Mr. Meyerson also for some emotional relief, as in the way you feel when disingenuousness (William Kristol), bullying (Christopher Hitchens), nastiness (Charles Krauthammer, Victor Davis Hanson), foolishness (Thomas Friedman), or incompetence (all of them) are called out for what they are and one's sense of justice is salved for a moment. (I'm afraid, though, that we have a long, long way to go before

the dereliction of the pundit class bottoms out.) How glad I am, too, to see that David Remnick's shocking and, for me, subscription-ending column in *The New Yorker* has not been forgotten.

FRANCIS INGLEDUEW
Teaneck, NJ

HAROLD MEYERSON'S statement on the pro-war pundits, "They ceased being intellectuals and became apologists," reveals a painful truth on both sides of the ever-widening aisle of political discourse. When the intellectual makes the mistake of proclaiming the completion of their ideological platform, their illustrious talents are wasted on the inevitable call to defend their new colossus. The result is an ongoing apologetic for something less than the truth. This explains why so many intelligent people end up promoting foolish ideas.

JIM JORDAN
Fort Lauderdale, FL

AS I READ "THEIR WAR, Too," I sensed an undercurrent hinted in certain of the positions of your chosen "mere pundits," yet the flow never surfaced. Here is what I mean: Is it possible that the underlying and unexpressed motivation of one or more of these writers—and many like them—was based on a concern for what would best serve the interests of Israel? Looking at your cover caricature, that may not be a remote possibility.

Having made that statement, I am acutely aware that exposure to anti-Semitism charges go hand in glove with such comments. At the age of 90, I have survived other equally ungrounded

charges, so for me the matter ends there.

However, there is a larger consideration, which is: Has *The American Prospect* joined the mainstream media (however that may be defined) in soft-pedaling the risk that criticism of Israel, or its leaders, can become a third rail of journalism?

Even more so, does a political third rail focus light on the Bush administration's go-slow policy in the Middle East, as relates to hopes of an Israeli-Palestinian final settlement?

As spoken by the exasperated king in *The King and I*, "Tis a puzzlement!"

ROBERT PETTIGREW
Orlando, FL

HAROLD MEYERSON'S article was sorely needed to highlight how the nation's conservatives have heaped so many wrongly placed accolades on the pundits who have misused their "power of the pen" in supporting the war on Iraq.

In the month of April alone, Thomas Friedman wrote three columns in *The New York Times* on various subjects in which he very cleverly inserted the theme that President Bush's war was for granting freedom to the Iraqis. It is very obvious that the justification-for-the-war insertion by Friedman had no bearing on the columns in question and was not in sync with the subject being discussed. Being a journalist, he should know this better than others, but it seems he had to do it, that he had to fulfill the "assignment" laid out by his own ideology—or, worse still, laid out by someone in the administration.

G.M. CHANDU
Flushing, NY

The P-Word

ICOMMEND THE AMERICAN Prospect for including a special report on juvenile justice ["Breaking Through"] in the September issue. This is an important subject that is commonly ignored by the media.

The article by Ellis Cose points to the disturbing fact that juveniles who are African American (as well as other minority groups) are overrepresented in the system. While the typical assumption is that this is the result of racial qualities and racial discrimination, respectable research and scattered data indicate that the most important factor is inadequate parenting attributable to the twin facts that an exceptionally high percentage of African American youths are born to teenage mothers and are

raised by single mothers.

Various studies have shown that the probability of incarceration for a juvenile of *any race* in families headed by never-married single mothers might be as much as 22 times higher than for juveniles in a two-parent family, sons of teen mothers are 2.7 times more likely to land in prison than sons of mothers in their early 20s, and 70 percent of juveniles in state reform institutions grew up in single- or no-parent situations. Combine these findings with the facts that 65 percent of African American children in the United States are being raised in single-parent families, 68 percent were born out of wedlock, and the rate of teen births for blacks is twice that for whites.

In view of these findings, I encourage academics and

politicians who are interested in the problem to collect and study systematic data on family structure and parenting practices with respect to all juveniles of all races who are caught up in the juvenile-justice system.

RICHARD K. PELZ
Seattle, WA

We're Out There!

IN "LETTING GO OF IRAQ" [September], Paul Starr writes that "[t]he nation has no enthusiasm for the war and no opposition to it. We have no parades and no protests."

I beg to differ. Before the war, I participated in several large demonstrations against the war, and these have continued to the present. Where has Mr. Starr been? I live in Denver, which is not a hotbed of protestation, but we had an

anti-war vigil on August 17 that was attended by a thousand people and sponsored by a coalition of anti-war organizations. United for Peace and Justice, meanwhile, has been planning a massive demonstration in cities such as Washington, New York, and San Francisco for months.

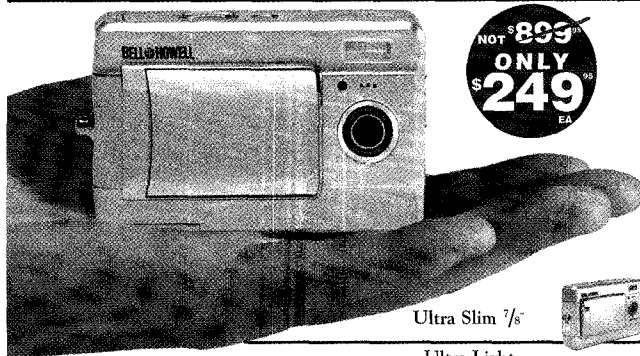
One problem has been a lack of attention by the media and an even greater lack of attention by the Bush administration. This inattention, however, does not mean that these protests have not occurred.

BARBARA MOE
Denver, CO

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Devil in the Details



BOLTON BEGINS

JOHN BOLTON IS IN THE building.

Just three weeks before some 170 heads of state converged on New York for the September 14–16 United Nations summit, which considered the most ambitious set of reforms in the organization's history, the new recess-appointed U.S. ambassador tossed a wrench in the works. Discarding months of diplomatic toil, Bolton submitted a modest 750 alterations to the 39-page text of proposed UN reforms, throwing the negotiations into complete disarray.

Many of these edits were merely grammatical, and some were just petty jabs at

the organization, such as eliminating the word "all" from the second paragraph ("We recognize the valuable role of *all* the major UN conferences ..."). But some marked a significant change in the U.S. bargaining position heralded by Bolton's arrival at Turtle Bay.

Perhaps none of these was more obnoxious (and more instructive of Bolton's new influence) than the systematic removal of all 14 references to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—and then, their subsequent reinsertion.

The MDGs grew out of a global agreement on aid and poverty eradication, known as the Millennium Declaration,

that was signed at the UN's summit in September 2000. The goals that Bolton initially decided the United Nations should not acknowledge are a set of eight development targets that grew from the declaration. These include reducing by half the proportion of people who live on less than a dollar a day and reducing by two-thirds the child-mortality rate by 2015.

B.B. (Before Bolton), the Bush administration had never before been averse to the mere mention of the goals, and U.B. (Until Bolton), the MDGs had not been a target of Bush administration animus. In the last year alone, the nongovernmental organization Citizens for Global Solutions identified no fewer than nine instances in which the administration approvingly referenced the MDGs. Further, in a meeting with NGO representatives shortly after Bolton's edits were reported by *The Washington Post* on August 25, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns refused to support Bolton's rejection of them. Burns neither confirmed nor denied that the United States was dropping its support of the MDGs, and those in the room came away thinking that Bolton had forged his very own MDG policy ahead of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

On September 6, after two weeks of squabbling and un-

necessary hard feelings, the U.S. delegation finally relented, agreeing that the text could reference the MDGs. And so the Bolton era began, initially pitting almost every other nation on the globe against us over our new ambassador's personal opposition to uttering the name of some nonbinding development goals.

We already knew that as a diplomat, Bolton is no Averell Harriman. And now we know that as an editor, he's not exactly William Shawn.

— MARK LEON GOLDBERG

HURRICANE OF DEBT

LAST SPRING, CONGRESSwoman Sheila Jackson-Lee offered an amendment to the gleefully punitive bankruptcy-reform bill under consideration in the House Judiciary Committee. Her proposal would have exempted aid and relief money received in the wake of a natural disaster from the income-means test that the new bill would apply to people seeking to file for the less-onerous Chapter 7 bankruptcy. As Jackson-Lee put it when proposing the amendment, to "hurt those who are already suffering from flooding or [a] collapsed roof or house that has gone out to sea is absolutely ridiculous." In response, the committee's famously avuncular chairman,

Jim Sensenbrenner, offered an expansive discussion of the proposal, which consisted entirely of the following: "The question is on the amendment. Those in favor will say, 'Aye'? Opposed, 'No'? The 'noes' appear to have it. The 'noes' have it. The amendment is not agreed to."

Fast-forward to Hurricane Katrina's devastation. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the disaster will cost 400,000 jobs nationally. People facing destroyed homes and lost jobs all across the Gulf Coast now face the harsh new realities of the bankruptcy-reform law, which takes effect on October 17. These not only include the strict means test for Chapter 7 filing but also requirements for voluminous new paperwork and for credit-counseling classes for debtors (just what refugees from a catastrophe will want to be spending their time on).

Now, Democrats in the House (led by Jackson-Lee and John Conyers) and the Senate (led by Russ Feingold) are pushing proposals to exempt victims of Katrina, either temporarily or permanently, from the provisions of the new bankruptcy law and to add broader exceptions for victims of all natural disasters. (Coincidentally, a newly published University of Nevada study finds that states hit by hurricanes in the last 25 years experienced an increase in

bankruptcy filings at a rate one and a half times greater than that in unaffected states.) If such proposals seem like a political no-brainer for Congress, recall that the Republicans expressed real reluctance over having to delay a vote to permanently repeal the estate tax one week after the hurricane hit, and that they're already discussing ways to pass new tax cuts and pro-industry energy measures under the guise of Katrina relief.

Republicans' immediate reaction to Democratic calls for delaying the implementation of the bankruptcy law was a dismissive scoff. And even if a public outcry eventually prompts a GOP flip-flop, it would only raise the question: If major changes are necessary at the very outset of its implementation, just how hot was this law to begin with?

— SAM ROSENFELD

FOOL ME TWICE ...

WHEN IS A BIPARTISAN commission not bipartisan? Perhaps when, like the bipartisan, bicameral congressional inquiry into Hurricane Katrina proposed on September 7, it's unveiled by Bill Frist and Dennis Hastert at a press conference Democratic leaders weren't even told about, much less invited to. Or when its membership, all

In August, Governors Bill Richardson of New Mexico and Janet Napolitano of Arizona declared **states of emergency** due to illegal immigration across their borders ... The declarations allow the governors to spend nearly \$1.5 million each to bolster the states' law enforcement and border patrols ... In 2004, **537,151 people were naturalized** to the United States ... 54 percent settled in four states: California, New York, Florida, and Texas ... The United States has a yearly net migration rate of **3.31 people per 1,000** ... 30 countries have net migration rates higher than the United States ... Immigration rates today are about the same as they were one century ago ... There are approximately **7 million undocumented immigrants** living in the United States ... In 2004, an average of 22,812 people were detained daily by the Immigration and Naturalization Service ... The U.S.-Mexican border is 1,952 miles long ... At any given time, it is protected **by 2,000 border-patrol agents** ... More than 3,000 people have died since the mid-'90s trying to cross it ... A bill introduced this year by Senators John McCain and Ted Kennedy would allow undocumented immigrants to get work visas and eventually apply for citizenship—provided they **stay employed, break no laws, and pay a \$1,500 fine** ... Another bill, sponsored by Senators Jon Kyl and John Cornyn, would require undocumented immigrants to admit their illegal status and then reapply to work in the United States from their native countries ... Opponents of the measure have dubbed it "**report to deport**" ... The arrest and deportation of all undocumented immigrants living in the United States would cost \$41 billion annually over five years ... The entire annual budget of the Homeland Security Department is \$34.2 billion ... A study of illegal Mexican immigrants found that **84 percent pay taxes**, and only 2 percent have ever received welfare or Social Security payments ... 22 percent of all American children under 6 years of age have immigrant parents ... Children of immigrants whose families are eligible for food stamps and other forms of financial assistance are **half as likely to receive them** as the children of nonimmigrants ... In April, a civilian group called The Minuteman Project sent 876 people to patrol the border between Arizona and Mexico ... In 2003, 46 percent of U.S. colleges reported **declines in the enrollment of foreign students**.

sitting senators and representatives subject to party discipline, will have a clear Republican majority just like an ordinary congressional committee. Or when, just like an ordinary committee, only the majority will be able to issue subpoenas and control the course of events. Or when, just like the GOP Congress of which this commission would be an extension, we can expect it to do nothing in the way of oversight of the executive branch. Instead, under cover of bipartisanship, it will produce a whitewash, scapegoating state and local officials while leaving the Bush administration unscathed.

Democrats have participated in this kind of committee once before, during the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence's inquiry into Iraq's weapons-of-mass-destruction programs. Under the leadership of Senator Pat Roberts, the panel insisted on separating the question of flawed intelligence from the issue of faulty administration claims *about* intelligence, with the latter issue, Roberts pledged, to be explored in a

separate report to be released only after the 2004 presidential election. Committee Democrats, led by Senator Jay Rockefeller, signed on to the process—and wound up signing off on a pre-election whitewash of a report that detailed errors by the intelligence professionals while remaining silent on the conduct of administration political appointees.

So the committee looked at the supposedly false claims made by former Ambassador Joe Wilson but never got around to the key claim that Wilson exposed—that the documents showing Iraq was seeking uranium from Niger were forgeries—which the administration used in its rush to war. Having agreed to participate in the report, committee Democrats then felt skittish about raising questions regarding the integrity of the process, a move that's puzzled even some members of Rockefeller's staff. After the election, meanwhile, Roberts quietly announced that the second report wouldn't be written at all, with nary a peep of protest from Democrats.

So far, party leaders don't seem willing to get played for fools a second time. Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid are refusing to appoint members to a stacked commission, instead pushing for an independent, truly bipartisan panel like the September 11 commission. Media coverage of the move, however, has been fairly clueless—Aren't the Democrats just being partisan?—so Democrats may feel pressure to break ranks. One leading candidate for the Rockefeller role is Joe Lieberman, ranking member on the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, whose chair, Republican Susan Collins, has already announced plans for hearings. "What about Susan Collins," asked one typically blinkered reporter at Pelosi's press conference on the issue. "Don't you trust her?"

If Democrats have any sense, their answer will remain, "No."

— MATTHEW YGLESIAS

THE OUTSIDERS

SO WHAT, EXACTLY, ARE the anti-war bloggers of the Democratic Party looking for in a presidential candidate? Some recent straw polls on leading anti-war blogs have produced some surprising results.

An ongoing MyDD poll, as of 1,339 respondents, found Wesley Clark leading the pack with the support 34 percent of readers. Anti-war Russ Feingold was nipping at his heels at 23 percent, and John Edwards ran third at 11 percent. But Hillary Clinton, proclaimed the Democratic

front-runner by virtually the entire chattering class, and well ahead in most polls, garnered only 8-percent support from the blogistas.

Things weren't so different over at Daily Kos. In one August straw poll, Clark led again, drawing 35 percent support from the 8,710 respondents, followed by 16 percent for Feingold and 9 percent for Clinton.

There's just one problem: Clark doesn't support immediate withdrawal from Iraq, which is the defining political issue on both blogs. In an August *Washington Post* op-ed, he wrote, "[I]t would also be a mistake to pull out [of Iraq] now, or to start pulling out or to set a date certain for pulling out." If that wasn't clear enough, he elaborated in a speech at the New America Foundation's "Terrorism, Security, and America's Purpose" conference in September, predicting that an immediate retreat would be a "long and bloody" process.

What does all this tell us about the Democratic bloggers? Markos Moulitsas of Daily Kos says that the support for Clark is evidence that "we are not an ideological community; we're a practical one." But how practical is it to back a candidate who's never held elected office, lost his bid last time around, and whose heavily Clintonite '04 fund-raising base will clearly go elsewhere in '08? With their inclinations toward Clark, Feingold, and Edwards, the bloggers look to be tilting in '08 toward the very same type of candidates they liked in '04: political outsiders.

— GARANCE FRANKE-RUTA

TRANSCRIPT

"Liberals who think this disaster is going to set off a progressive revival need to explain how a comprehensive governmental failure is going to restore America's faith in big government."

— David Brooks, *New York Times*, September 11, 2005

"The huge bureaucratic government will never be able to protect you. If you rely on government for anything—*anything*—you're going to be disappointed, no matter who the president is."

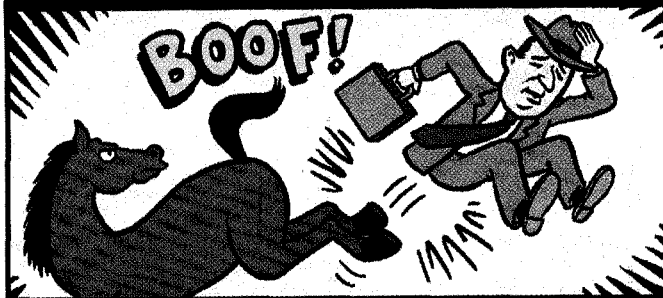
— Bill O'Reilly, *The O'Reilly Factor*, September 5, 2005

"You know, it's amazing that what worked is private initiative, local leaders, private citizens, and individuals all over the devastated area in Louisiana, and also all over the country trying to get them supplies. What didn't work are the agencies and the bureaucracies with big budgets, big plans; couldn't get them there."

— Louisiana Republican Senator David Vitter, Scarborough County, September 12, 2005

The GOOD OL' GOOD OL' BOY NETWORK

EX-FEMA DIRECTOR MICHAEL BROWN WAS HIRED BY HIS COLLEGE ROOMMATE—AFTER BEING FIRED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ARABIAN HORSE ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISORY FAILURE.



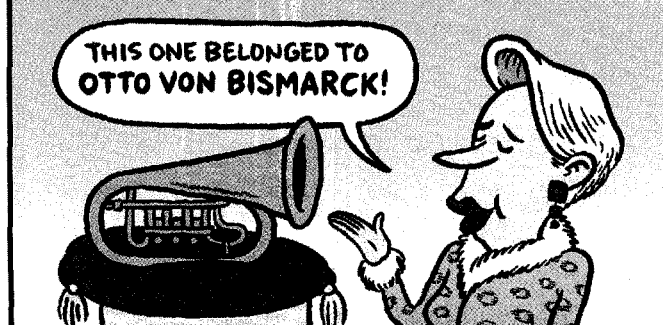
WHO ARE SOME OTHER SIMILARLY QUALIFIED MEMBERS OF THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION?

PAUL BLOVINGTON III—EXPERIENCE: HEAD OF THE FOIE GRAS ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA. FIRED FOR EATING ALL THE CONTEST ENTRIES AT PATÉ FEST '02.



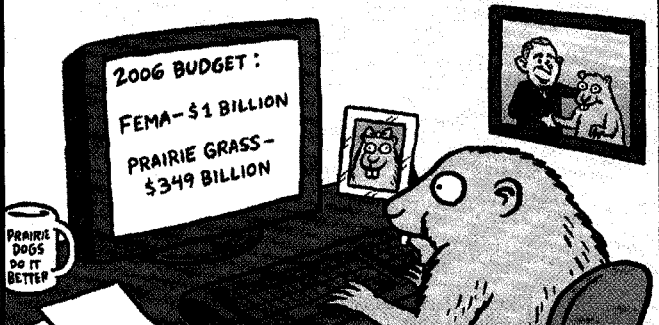
WHITE HOUSE CONNECTION: ONCE CADDIED FOR DICK CHENEY.
POSITION: IN CHARGE OF FOOD AID TO AFRICA.

CLARETTE PETTIBONE—EXPERIENCE: COLLECTOR OF PERIOD FLUGELHORNS.



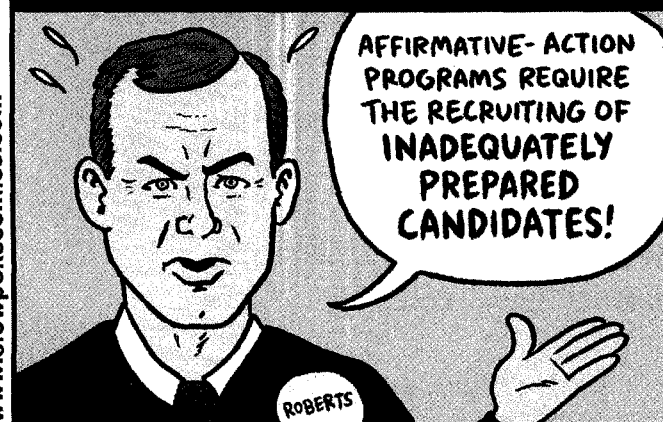
WHITE HOUSE CONNECTION: TWIRLED BATONS WITH CONDI IN SIXTH GRADE.
POSITION: CHIEF NEGOTIATOR WITH NORTH KOREA.

CHUCKLES THE PRAIRIE DOG—EXPERIENCE: CHEWING, BURROWING.



WHITE HOUSE CONNECTION: LIVED ON BUSH'S RANCH.
POSITION: FEDERAL BUDGET-POLICY ANALYST.

THIS GOOD OL' BOY NETWORK MAKES ONE WONDER ABOUT THE BUSHIES' RATIONALE FOR OPPOSING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.



THE WHITE HOUSE COORDINATOR OF NEPOTISTIC HIRING DEFENDS THEIR POLICY.



Excerpts from Cato Institute Analysis*:

"The government is waging an aggressive, intemperate, unjustified war on pain doctors."

"By demonizing physicians as drug dealers and exaggerating the health risk of pain management, the federal government has made physicians scapegoats for the failed drug war. Even worse, the Drug Enforcement Administration's renewed war on pain doctors has frightened many physicians out of pain management altogether, exacerbating an already serious health crisis - the widespread undertreatment of intractable pain."

"Experts agree that tens of millions of Americans suffer from undertreated or untreated pain... According to one 1999 survey, just one in four pain patients received treatment adequate to alleviate suffering."

"The medical evidence overwhelmingly indicates that when administered properly, opioid therapy rarely, if ever, results in 'accidental addiction' or opioid abuse."

"Pain specialists make an important distinction between patients who depend on opiates to function normally - to get out of bed, tend to household chores, and hold down jobs - and

addicts who take drugs for euphoria, and whose lifestyles deteriorate as a result of taking opiates, instead of improving. The DEA makes no such distinction."

"The relationship between a doctor and his patient is crucial to the proper assessment and treatment of the patient's condition. The DEA's aggressive investigative procedure poisons the doctor-patient relationship from both sides."

"The DEA continues to lower its evidentiary standards, making it nearly impossible for many doctors to determine what is and isn't permitted."

"Large quantities of narcotics routinely go missing en route from manufacturers to wholesalers and from wholesalers to retailers. The DEA itself acknowledges this problem. Given the poor job the DEA is doing of monitoring the narcotics it's charged with overseeing... DEA's attempt to blame physicians for the drugs' street availability seems arbitrary, unjustified, and capricious."

Common Sense for Drug Policy

www.CommonSenseDrugPolicy.org www.DrugWarFacts.org

H. Michael Gray, Chair; Robert E. Field, Co-Chair

* "Treating Doctors as Drug Dealers: The DEA's War on Prescription Painkillers" by Professor Ronald T. Libby, June 16, 2005.
<http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa545.pdf>

Dispatches

"Since the 1985 breakup of the Bell System, CWA membership has soared from 580,000 to 700,000."

—PAGE 15

WITHDRAWAL PAINS

Looking for a unified Democratic position on leaving Iraq? Here it is: Each individual Democrat takes whatever position he or she wants.

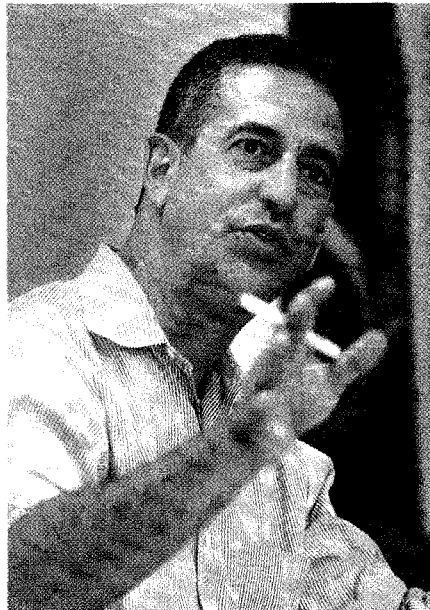
BY MATTHEW YGLESIAS

RICHARD CLARKE, THE FORMER National Security Council counterterrorism chief whose book criticizing the Bush administration—and the White House's ferocious counterattack—briefly dominated public debate in summer 2004, doesn't seem to have enjoyed the experience. At a lunch in Washington organized by Steve Clemons, director of the New America Foundation's foreign-policy program, Clarke bobs and weaves in response to a softball question about the White House's anti-terrorism strategy, finally saying, "I'm trying very hard to stay nonpartisan."

Throughout the lunch, the pattern recurs: Clarke waxes at length on every terrorism-related subject under the sun, but when talk turns to the ongoing U.S. presence in Iraq, his comments grow cramped and he's reluctant to draw conclusions. Clarke does go so far as to say that the question of whether a withdrawal of U.S. forces might reduce tension is "a very important" one that we need to be asking. But on the matter of setting a timetable for withdrawal, Clarke has nothing to say.

In that, he resembles most Democrats nowadays: highly critical of the Bush administration's open-ended meddling in Iraq when prodded to talk but unwilling to offer a strategy for disengagement. After Russ Feingold's August 17 decision to call for a specific schedule to remove troops by the end of 2006, none of his fellow senators hopped on the bandwagon, not even Ted Kennedy, who in January

suggested he was thinking along similar lines without naming a specific date. The bulk of elected Democrats, including the party's national-security leadership (Harry Reid, Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, et al.) agree with the White House that a time line should be rejected.



Just Say Go: Wisconsin's Russ Feingold

THERE'S A REASON THE POLITICAL leadership is rejecting withdrawal: While most Americans now say that the war was a mistake and take a dim view of the Bush administration's handling of the conflict, support for withdrawal—either immediate or in timetable form—remains below 50 percent.

As policy, however, the Pottery Barn

Democrats are falling short. Everyone agrees that Iraq requires, above all else, a political settlement, and a credible case can be made that a timetable is the best opportunity to achieve just that. The American troop presence in Iraq is, itself, a major Sunni Arab grievance, and, uniquely among their litany of complaints, something we have direct control over. Besides, efforts to cajole the Shia and Kurdish politicians who run the Iraqi government into adopting a more conciliatory stance toward the Sunnis have clearly failed. Despite Pottery Barn complaints, the administration has, in fact, tried quite hard to push just such an agenda, first through the person of Iyad Allawi and then during the negotiations over the Iraqi constitution. Ending the unconditional American security guarantee might well cause Iraqi leaders to rethink the wisdom of that path. *Slate's* Fred Kaplan reported on July 27 that "since the Americans have said they will leave once the Iraqi security forces are self-sufficient [Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim] Jaafari figures it's best to keep that day at bay" by deliberately foot-dragging on the creation of competent security forces.

For these and other reasons, members of the Democratic policy establishment in good standing—like Michael O'Hanlon, James Steinberg, and Ivo H. Daalder at the Brookings Institution—have come out for some form of a timetable-based strategy. But in op-eds and television appearances, most elected Democrats, while ostensibly critical, are in practice repeating the White House line that what's needed is for reconstruction aid to flow, Iraqi troops to be trained, and, most of all, a political compromise to be reached that can unite Iraq's different ethnic and sectarian factions. This is exactly what the administration is trying to do; Democratic critics are left simply insisting that it

should be done better without an idea of *how* to do it better. Meanwhile, consensus-oriented institutions like the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the Senate Democrats' new rapid-response communications shop, and the Center for American Progress refuse to offer policy ideas one way or another, instead issuing laundry lists of complaints and damning statistics reflecting the reality—on which everyone can at least agree—that things are going poorly.

The only substantive way that party leaders challenge the White House is to demand that the administration publish a set of metrics for success that would be subject to public scrutiny. This, again, is smart politics, assuming the mission in Iraq is going south, as it would reveal the administration's failures; similarly, refusal to publish such criteria would undercut the official line that all is well. As policy, however, it's hard to see how this could make a difference: While metrics could help make this clearer to the public, they can't change the facts on the ground.

In an August 24 op-ed, Gary Hart challenged directly, accusing Democrats of lacking the "courage" to call for withdrawal. And he's right: Opposition to withdrawal seems overwhelmingly political. Wesley Clark, who as a war opponent is seen by many hawks as an effective spokesman against a timetable, has warned in the pages of *The Washington Post* and in public speeches that we must "change the course" in Iraq "before it's too late." I asked Clark when we might know that the window of opportunity had closed, and he dodged, saying only, "We're still far from that point." Biden, when asked for a response to Hart on the August 28 edition of *This Week*, declined to do so in any meaningful way, offering instead the bizarre reply that "for me to defend myself against Gary Hart is kind of ludicrous to begin with. I kind of resent it, to tell the truth."

But despite the careful efforts at political positioning and the blows President Bush has taken on the Iraq issue, Democrats of all stripes face a painful political problem of their own. Most polls have support for withdrawal in the near future

in the low 40s. That's not nearly enough for an anti-war campaign to win. At the same time, those numbers suggest that an overwhelming majority of actual Democratic voters want to end the war soon. It's hard to imagine Democratic politicians credibly positioning themselves as the leaders of a party of better war management as long as it's clear that, in office, they'd be beholden to a deeply anti-war base. Moreover, there's reason to think that even if a majority of Americans *do* come to favor abandoning the war effort, advocating withdrawal would be a poor political strategy. Defeatism, as the 1972 election showed, is not a very appealing political product, even in the context of a deeply unpopular war.

More convincing anti-war arguments, centered on the case that withdrawal could be a positive contribution to Iraq's stability, might do the trick, but bucking

majority opinion is something politicians are always loath to do. Thus, it's no surprise that many Democrats seem to feel that caution is the better part of valor on this issue, and that the best thing to do is to say as little as possible. Iraq, after all, is a mess of the president's creation, not theirs, and no honest policy proposal can be as appealing as the fantasy universe of Bush's speeches. Poking the occasional hole in that bubble and then lying low while hoping the administration implodes seems to make sense, though that strategy risks repeating the debacle of 2002, when the politics of evasion went down to massive defeat. Under the circumstances, though, it might be best to simply abandon the quest for party unity and to watch the midterms closely. The fortunes of the hawks and doves in those elections should help guide the Democrat platform as they head into 2008. **TAP**

COAST TO COAST

The off-year elections to watch: the tight Virginia governor's race and the anti-union ballot initiatives in Schwarzenegger's California

BY HAROLD MEYERSON

MIDWAY THROUGH VIRGINIA Lieutenant Governor Tim Kaine's presentation-cum-slide show, a tour de force on education policy in the state where Democrat Kaine is running for governor in November's upcoming election, a slide like no other abruptly appears on the screen. It shows mestizo peasant children in a barren room clustering around some young Yanqui-bearded, hair flowing in all directions, gaunt as a wraith. Kaine—the very model of middle-class, middle-aged professional decorum—beams at the crowd. "That's me," he says. The crowd erupts in laughter.

In his early 20s, Kaine took a year off from Harvard Law School to do missionary work in Honduras, where he ended up as principal of a vocational school. The image is meant both to underscore his religious convictions and his commitment to education, which is the centerpiece of his campaign to succeed Mark

Warner, the popular Democratic governor who is term-limited out of office at year's end.

Kaine has been stumping the commonwealth—on this evening, he's in the Prince William County Supervisors' meeting room, about 40 miles south of Washington—on a platform of universal preschool for 4-year-olds, a program that would cost roughly \$300 million. "We know that 90 percent of brain growth occurs by the time a child is 5," he tells the audience of largely white professionals. "This is something that we've only recently discovered."

Kaine has embarked on what Michael Singer, an aide to Warner, terms a test of "whether the Warner model can be sustained." That model entails spending a lot of time in the reddest of this red state's regions, affirming an affinity not only for their culture but for what Singer calls "the more practical issues of economic devel-

opment, health care, and especially education, targeted to less-well-off kids in rural areas."

THIS IS NO SMALL TEST, BECAUSE what's really at stake is the question of whether even non-national Democrats can win in the South. After the red-state debacle of the John Kerry campaign, Democrats nationally are paying increased attention to people like the politically savvy Warner, who persuaded the state's Republican General Assembly to raise taxes and who, in his final year in office, has a stunning 74-percent approval rating. Kaine, an attorney who was mayor of Richmond before his election as lieutenant governor, has understandably hitched his star to Warner's, and in the week following Labor Day, the two campaigned together in the hill towns along the West Virginia border. They stumped through Alleghany County, where Kerry won 44.5 percent of the vote but where Warner, in his 2001 election, had pulled down 59 percent. And in Alleghany, as



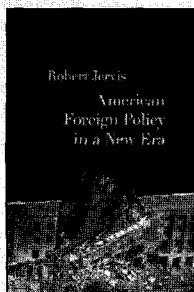
Not Charles Foster: Kaine wants universal preschool for 4-year-olds.

throughout the commonwealth, Kaine hammered on what Singer calls the state's "new Democratic message: kids."

Even as Kaine links himself to Warner, his Republican opponent, former state Attorney General Jerry Kilgore, clings to Virginia's most popular Republican, Sen-

ator (and former Governor) George Allen. Like Allen, Kilgore is more anti-taxer than cultural jihadist, distancing himself from "Intelligent Design" by affirming allegiance neither to science nor religion but to Allen. "I support Virginia's Standards of Learning," Kilgore said at a Vir-

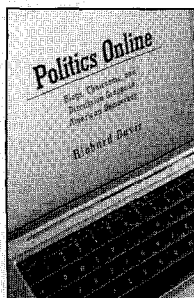
Engaging Ideas



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Robert Jervis

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Transforming U.S. Intelligence

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"*Transforming U.S. Intelligence* marks the way to intelligence successes: collect the targeted data, analyze it objectively, and then act. These excellent essays must be heeded by those policymakers and elected officials who seek to improve U.S. intelligence, not just make it

bigger and costlier. *Transforming U.S. Intelligence* shows better collection and analysis can be done; as important, it shows that no quantity of 'better' intelligence is any good if policymakers fail to act on it."

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ginia Bar Association forum. "And in Virginia's Standards of Learning, we focus on the science, and I continue to support the Standards of Learning, because the standards were created during Governor Allen's tenure as governor."

Warner's successes—which include raising the gas tax and sales tax, leaving corporate taxes unchanged, lowering the grocery tax, cutting income taxes for low-income residents, and boosting spending on schools and roads—have put Kilgore in a bit of a bind. Fully 57 percent of Virginians, in recent polls, support Warner's tax increases.

Kilgore is attacking Kaine as a cultural liberal. But Kaine, a devout Catholic, opposes both the death penalty and abortion and pledges to enforce the state's death-penalty law and not to criminalize

glance have much in common with rural Virginia whites, California Democrats hope to defeat Schwarzenegger's initiatives with pretty much the same pitch that Kaine is making in Virginia: putting more resources into schools.

Each of Schwarzenegger's ballot measures is intended to shift power away from Democrats and their leading supporters, public employee unions most especially. One measure, Proposition 76, eliminates the state's statutory Proposition 98 requirement to devote at least 40 percent of its general fund to K-12 education and gives the governor unilateral power to cut spending in midyear if revenues look skimpy. A second would subject the state to a mid-decade redistricting. A third would extend the probation period before public-school teachers get tenure from two

percent to 19 percent margin. Proposition 75, by contrast, is leading by 55 percent to 32 percent, but a similar initiative in 1998 had an even larger lead at a comparable point in that campaign, and eventually went down to defeat.

Schwarzenegger's mind-boggling collapse in popularity is the other thing the Democrats have going for them. In February, according to the Field Poll, 56 percent of Californians were inclined to give him a second term, with 42 percent disinclined. This September, those figures were reversed: Just 36 percent favored a second term, with 56 percent opposed. Schwarzenegger's fall can be attributed primarily to his hugely unsuccessful war on public-employee unions, beginning with his failed proposal to substitute 401(k)s for pensions (which would have eliminated survivor benefits for widows and orphans of police and firefighters), proceeding to his attempt to reduce the nurse-staffing requirements for hospitals, and concluding with his reneging on a pledge to restore education funding. The discovery that Schwarzenegger was making \$8 million from bodybuilding magazines that depended on nutritional-supplement advertising—after he'd vetoed stricter regulations on such supplements—convinced Californians that he was just one more corrupt pol. And his insistence on calling November's special election as a way to work around the General Assembly has plainly outraged voters who did not wish to be subjected to another barrage of campaign advertising.

And therein lies the challenge for Schwarzenegger's opponents. "My fear is that voters will express their dissatisfaction with the special [election] by staying home," says Dean Tipps, director of the SEIU's California state council. "We need them to express their outrage by voting 'no.'"

If they do, it will be partly because they, like the swing voters of Virginia, support the Democrats' commitment to education. We'll know in November if the party of bread and butter and school books (and, perhaps, the party of better flood management) can prevail in both blue states and red. **TAP**

Proposition 75 would bar public-employee unions from spending funds on electoral activities without prior written approval from their rank and file.

choice. He's against gay adoption rights and late-term abortions, and, if anything, seemed almost relieved when the state's NARAL chapter declined to endorse him. (A third candidate, state Senator Russ Potts, is a renegade Republican who's pro-choice, pro-gay adoption, and anti-spending, but he's expected to finish in the low single-digits.)

The rapid extension of the Washington metropolitan area into greater and greater swaths of Virginia is slowly making the state less conservative and Republican. George W. Bush carried it in 2004 with 54 percent, while he carried Georgia—a somewhat comparable state because of Atlanta's presence—with 58 percent. The race is rated a toss-up, but Kaine's emphasis on education may give him the edge.

MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE COUNTRY in California, Democrats are embroiled in a fierce campaign to defeat four measures that Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has directly or indirectly placed on a November special-election ballot. And while the new immigrant Latino voters of California may not at first

years to five. And the fourth, Proposition 75—likely to produce a \$100 million donnybrook between unions and business interests—would prohibit public-employee unions from spending their funds on electoral activities without prior written permission from their individual members.

The state's public-sector unions—dominated by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the California Teachers Association, which together have more than 1 million members in-state—have waged a concerted campaign against the proposals. Gale Kaufman, the unions' campaign consultant, says that the advertising not just for Proposition 76 but also for the union-busting Proposition 75 will focus on education, because its effect would be to silence the state's leading advocate for education spending.

"Defunding education is the third rail in California politics," says Kaufman. "It's a huge issue with voters, a huge issue with Latino voters. Why did anyone think these were winnable issues?" Proposition 76 most certainly isn't; in the latest Field Poll, it's trailing by a 65

LABOR GAINS?

For a change, a piece of good news from the world of labor: Larry Cohen takes the reins at the CWA, a union that's adapted to the times.

BY JIM GROSSFELD

"CITY AND STATE, PLEASE?"

For a moment I think the voice at the other end of the phone belongs to a telephone operator, but I've been conned: I'm talking to a piece of voice-recognition technology.

Over the course of the last two decades, the Communications Workers of America (CWA) has seen the loss of thousands of telephone operators' jobs and many others, too. Some were due to automation, others to offshoring, but most were the result of structural changes in the industry. After AT&T's 1984 divestment of its 22 regional telephone companies, the CWA, together with the International Brotherhood of Electrical

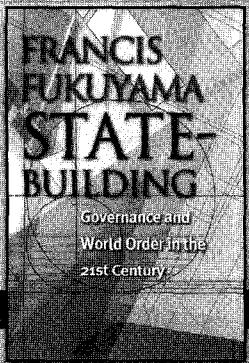
Workers, represented 150,000 of the company's workers. This year, when a much smaller AT&T was purchased by SBC Communications, the union represented only 25,000. All told, the CWA estimates, about 250,000 telecommunications jobs have been lost over the past 25 years.

STAGGERING RESULTS LIKE THESE have devastated some unions, but not the CWA. In fact, it's flourishing. Since the 1985 breakup of the Bell System, CWA membership has soared from 580,000 to 700,000. What was once a union of telephone-company employees has been transformed into a "union for the information age" representing workers in in-

dustries from publishing to health care.

A principal engineer of this metamorphosis is Larry Cohen, who, with the retirement of Morton Bahr in August, was elected the union's new president. Cohen is often described as one of the best strategists in the labor movement. He is also one of its most intense. At 56, Cohen is lean, driven, and speaks with the authority of a delicatessen owner presiding over the lunchtime rush—not rude, but direct and to the point. And the point he emphasizes is that the future of the American labor movement hinges on democracy.

"Unions work best when they're organized from the workplace up, not the top down," Cohen said in an interview. "Unions sometimes lose sight of what we are, which is a workplace organization where anybody who works for the union—no matter whether it's the president or the director of this or that—works for the stewards." Cohen's zeal for the grass roots has been a constant throughout his more than 25 years in the CWA, during which time he's helped organize



State-Building

Governance and World Order
in the 21st Century

Francis Fukuyama

"Fukuyama is a wonderful synthesizer of grand subjects, an adventurer who doesn't mind summing up the history of development theory in one chapter and the history of organizational theory in the next. He pulls this off with minimal resort to jargon, and he pulls the reader along with him."

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"Fukuyama notes the missteps and misunderstandings of the international development community, which has only recently embraced the obvious: that stable and well-functioning political institutions are a precondition for economic advancement. His more important argument, however, is that outside actors have little ability to help countries strengthen their state capacity—and often pursue policies that actually weaken political institutions. On the other hand, he suggests that, in some of the most severe cases, the only option is a return to a neocolonial or mandate system, but such steps clash with current global norms of sovereignty."

—Foreign Affairs

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more than 175,000 new members. In 1998 he was elected the union's executive vice president. His message? Not only is the CWA strong and democratic; it's strong *because* it's democratic.

The late Charles Larrowe, biographer of the militant West Coast longshoreman's union leader Harry Bridges, once said, borrowing the phrase originated by Robert Michels, that U.S. unions were guided by an "iron law of oligarchy." By the time labor leaders make it to the top of their organization, Larrowe said, they have grown to distrust rank-and-file activism and to be fearful of dissent. With Cohen it seems the opposite is true. In 1988, he crafted the CWA's mobilization program, an effort that enlisted thousands of rank-and-file union members in a protest campaign that successfully pressured the regional Bell System in 1989 contract talks. He also helped launch Jobs with Justice, a network of grass-roots activist coalitions now operating in 29 states.

This grass-roots culture is reflected in the union's history as well. From its beginnings in the 1930s as an alliance of 31 separate telephone-workers organizations, the CWA grew as much by merging with small, independent unions of telephone workers as it did by organizing. The upshot, Cohen believes, is that even as the CWA expanded, it retained the culture of these smaller unions and, with it, a sense of being more directly accountable to its members. Rachel Padgett, executive director of the New York-based Association for Union Democracy—a group that routinely charges many labor leaders with quashing internal dissent—ranks the CWA as one of the most democratic anywhere.

Cohen's grass-roots focus is a sharp departure from the complex debate over the AFL-CIO's functions and finances that rocked the labor federation last summer. In that debate, a group of unions, organized under the banner of the Change to Win coalition, argued that unions must be consolidated and compelled by the AFL-CIO to organize within their jurisdictions. Though Cohen is demure in describing his role in organized labor's smackdown, he, together with the Amer-

ican Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees' Paul Booth, are often singled out for offering the most penetrating critique of that position. Cohen dismissed the claim that structural changes within the AFL-CIO would spur union growth. "In CWA, we think that the issue is the virtual elimination of collective-bargaining rights and the linkage between those rights and any modern democracy," he explained in *The Nation* magazine. "The primary crisis is not about union membership. The crisis is about American workers' right to join and build unions."

Cohen, who backed federation President John Sweeney's re-election, now represents the CWA on the AFL-CIO Executive Council, where he will undoubtedly be the most vocal backer of the federation's campaign for labor-law reforms. His will also be a particularly influential voice given the CWA's new importance within the smaller AFL-CIO that emerged from this summer's controversy.

Among Cohen's successes are efforts—made possible, supporters say, by the CWA's small-union culture—to win the support of workers who might otherwise be ambivalent about joining a union of telecommunications workers. They include a broad cross section of the American workforce—professional employees of the University of California, hospital workers in New York, state employees in Mississippi, and technicians at Comcast in Texas. Last year, the 46,000-member Association of Flight Attendants merged with the CWA.

With Cohen's support, the CWA is also attempting to organize new industries. In 1998 the union joined forces with the Washington Alliance of Technology Workers, or WashTech, an energetic grass-roots organization of Microsoft workers. Now chartered as a CWA local, WashTech is spearheading Techs Unite, a new advocacy organization that could become a model for organizing high-tech workers. The CWA has also been backing Alliance@IBM, an unusual initiative that uses the Internet to bring IBM's far-flung workers together in what amounts to a virtual union hall.

But the CWA's most important battle

is to keep up with the constant upheaval in the telecommunications industry. To do so, Cohen and others have used contract negotiations to press employers for neutrality agreements to prevent employer meddling in union organizing drives and "card check" recognition, a process that enables workers to demonstrate their support for the union without the long delays and red tape of a vote supervised by the National Labor Relations Board. The results have been encouraging. For example, after winning such an agreement from Cingular Inc. this summer, the CWA organized 4,000 workers at AT&T Wireless, which had recently been acquired by Cingular.

Cohen is convinced, though, that if the CWA is going to maintain and expand its strength in the telecom industry, it will need to take its fight overseas. He points out, for example, that the fiercely anti-union T-Mobile is owned by Deutsche Telekom, whose workers have long been represented by the CWA's German counterpart. He thinks part of the solution is the Union Network International (UNI), a global federation of 900 unions representing 15 million workers worldwide. Cohen, who heads up UNI's telecom division, is leading a multinational effort by UNI members to press the German firm to curb union opposition by T-Mobile and other Deutsche Telekom subsidiaries. "Company executives have even acknowledged that they couldn't get away with this kind of behavior back in Germany," said Cohen.

At a time when many in the union movement are anxiously looking for new, unorthodox tactics that can turn organized labor's fortunes around, Larry Cohen is a fundamentalist who is convinced that the best strategy is also the most basic: democracy, rank-and-file activism, and labor unity, both at home and abroad. Now, as the CWA's president, he intends to prove it works. **TAP**

Jim Grossfeld is a writer and a former communications director at the United Mine Workers of America. He is leading a research project exploring attitudes toward workplace organization among professionals and technical employees.

Tax Follies at *TNR*

BY ROBERT S. MCINTYRE

YOU HAVE TO WONDER. HALF TO THREE-QUARTERS of the American public doesn't believe in evolution (depending on how you define it). One out of three Americans thinks the budget deficit can be eliminated (a) by hoping (or praying) that it goes away (8 percent)

or (b) by cutting taxes even more (25 percent). Anti-scientific, un-arithmetic thinking seems to be rampant. But has *The New Republic* gone over to the dark side, too?

In August, a *TNR* cover story promoted the wacky idea that we should scrap all of the federal government's progressive taxes in favor of a national sales tax. Such an enormous shift in the tax burden away from the rich and onto the poor and the middle class is the linchpin of what authors Larry Kotlikoff and Niall Ferguson call their "holistic" approach to "Social Security reform, health-care reform, and tax reform." Their spending proposals—which include a pernicious restructuring of Social Security benefits in favor of high earners and a goofy system of personalized health-insurance vouchers—are hugely defective. But these half-baked schemes are mere window dressing for what they care about most: their radically unfair tax plan.

Boston University economist Kotlikoff is a longtime sales-tax advocate whose work includes a 1993 article on the topic for the libertarian Cato Institute. Scottish-born Ferguson currently teaches history at Harvard University and is a senior fellow at the conservative Hoover Institution. Despite their pedigrees, they do get one thing right: Our country needs much higher taxes to pay for public services.

Indeed, the authors imply that they want to boost federal revenues by almost half. That's quite ambitious (although given their health-insurance

plan, it may not be enough). But the way they would achieve this massive tax increase is abominable.

"The federal fiscal system should be moderately progressive," they state as their first principle. By which they mean far less progressive than it is now.

To counter the well-known fact that sales taxes are inherently regressive, Kotlikoff and Ferguson brag that their proposed national sales tax would offer a universal rebate, designed to exempt everyone on their spending up to the poverty line. They fail to mention, however, that our current income tax doesn't tax families with children until they make more than twice the poverty level. So even with the rebates, replacing current federal taxes with a sales tax would add thousands of dollars a year to the taxes of all but the richest Americans. Those at the very top, on the other hand, would get hundreds of thousands of dollars each in annual tax cuts.

Beyond failing the test of fairness, the authors' fiscal arithmetic doesn't add up, either. They claim that at a 33-percent rate, their sales tax would produce revenues equal to 21 percent of the economy. (The existing federal taxes that they implicitly retain, including excise taxes, customs duties, and most of the worker side

of the payroll tax, would bring their promised total up to 25 percent of the economy—versus only 17 percent now.) This, they say, would be enough to replace personal income taxes, corporate income taxes, estate taxes, and the employer side of the payroll tax, plus leave enough to pay for universal health insurance.

But that's a pipe dream. To collect 21 percent of the economy in sales taxes would require a tax rate of about 60 percent—assuming almost perfect compliance and a preposterously broad tax base that would include, for example, housing, education, and religious services. (Taxing health care wouldn't produce any net revenue because the federal government would be paying for it.)

In addition, state and local sales taxes probably would have to be double what they are now, as few if any states could run their corporate and personal income taxes without the federal government's help. So the total sales-tax rate would have to be close to 75 percent.

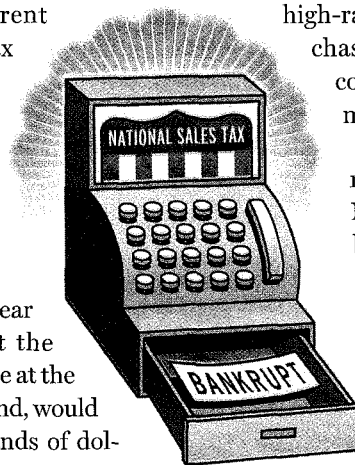
At which point, of course, cheating and tax avoidance would be rampant, as would lobbying for sales-tax exemptions. It's odd, for example, that Kotlikoff and Ferguson think it's plausible that the public would tolerate an extremely high-rate sales tax on home purchases when our current income tax actually subsidizes mortgage payments.

Kotlikoff and Ferguson maintain that their "new New Deal represents the best chance of the Democrats getting back into power." It's hard to believe that they really favor that goal. But even if they do, given how badly the national-sales-tax idea played for Republicans

in the 2004 elections, their political advice is worse than their economics.

As for *TNR*, let's hope publishing this awful piece was only a momentary lapse. **TAP**

Robert S. McIntyre is the director of Citizens for Tax Justice.



The Defectors

*Some House Democrats have to vote with Bush from time to time.
But what about the ones who don't have to—but do it anyway?*

BY ROBERT KUTTNER AND ASHEESH KAPUR SIDDIQUE

RICK LARSEN IS A THIRD-TERM DEMOCRATIC representative from Lake Stevens in Washington state. A balding former publicist for the Washington State Dental Association, Larsen, 40, is a proud member of the New Democrat Coalition. His district, Washington's 2nd, runs north from the Seattle suburbs to the Canadian border. It is, on balance, fairly liberal—George W. Bush lost the district in both 2000 and 2004—and Larsen's seat is secure. After a closer race in 2002, Larsen won this traditionally Democratic district last year almost 2 to 1.

Yet Larsen's voting record doesn't reflect these numbers: He voted in favor of the bankruptcy bill crafted by the credit-card industry, the Bush administration's estate-tax repeal, and the tort "reform" bill supported by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce limiting the right to sue.

Three-thousand miles away, in a working- and middle-class majority African American district, Gregory Meeks of Queens, New York, voted for two of these three conservative Bush bills, and, for good measure, supported the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). Meeks' last election was unopposed, and it would be very hard to argue that any of these bills helped his constituents.

With a closely divided House, faithless Democrats like these are helping Bush serve corporations at the expense of working Americans. CAFTA, which will divert jobs, passed by two votes, 15 of them Democratic. The bankruptcy bill will put millions of Americans who declared personal bankruptcy—about half because they faced staggering medical bills—on harsh payback plans rather than allowing them the traditional clean start. The tort bill caps the ability of people grievously maimed by corporate negligence to collect damages sought by juries. The estate-tax repeal, in order to help a few thousand of America's richest families hoard more billions, will deny the U.S. Treasury tens of billions every year that might help ordinary families. (A similar problem obtains in the Senate, where California's Dianne Feinstein is a prime blue-state offender. But that's a topic for another day.)

After those 15 Democrats deserted the caucus on CAFTA, an angry Nancy Pelosi vowed to strip some offenders of committee assignments, which help them raise special-interest money. But

as we go to press, this has not yet happened, and insiders say the House minority leader may wait until the next Congress, and merely maintain the threat in the meantime.

Nor do some Democrats think she should even try. "Democrats are too diverse a party for everyone just to follow one line," says Dave McCurdy, a former Oklahoma New Democratic congressman who now lobbies for the electronics industry. "What would you have us do?" asks Representative Barney Frank, the outspoken Massachusetts liberal. "The last time we punished someone, it was when we kicked Phil Gramm off the budget committee in 1982."

Gramm had been the lead Democratic sponsor of Ronald Reagan's budget cuts. Resigning from the Democratic caucus, he promptly switched parties—and then got elected to the Senate as a Republican. In fact, the caucus did remove two other chairmen in 1990, Glenn Anderson from the House Public Works and Transportation Committee and Frank Annunzio from the House Administration Committee (both from safe Democratic seats) with no ill effects. But the Gramm episode is now part of party lore and still haunts the leadership.

BY CONTRAST, THE MACHINE RUN BY HOUSE MAJORITY Leader Tom DeLay is much tougher about whipping wavering Republicans, offering rewards, and threatening punishments, including the nuclear threat of sponsoring primary opponents. Marge Roukema, a moderate Republican from the northern New Jersey suburbs, barely survived a two-primary challenges in 1998 and 2000 by conservative Scott Garrett, who was encouraged by the Republican House leadership. After she won her primary by just 52 percent to 48 percent in 2000, the leadership denied her the chair of the Financial Services Committee. A worn-down Roukema announced her retirement, and Garrett handily took the seat in 2002. And when conservative Chris Smith of New Jersey's nearby 4th District defied the leadership and called for making vets' benefits an entitlement, DeLay promptly stripped Smith of his Veterans Affairs Committee chairmanship.

DeLay basically runs a parliamentary party. He can play this kind of hardball because he has a movement behind him both in

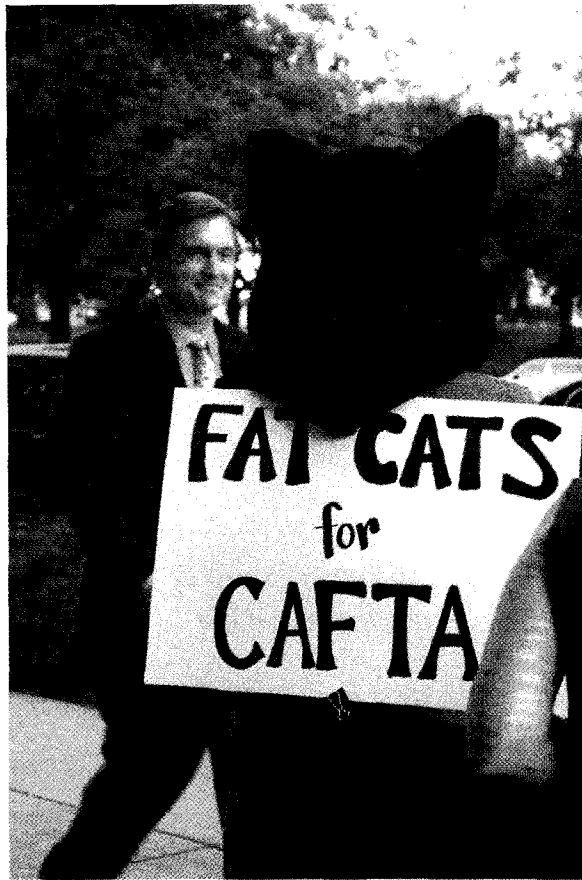
Washington and in the Republican base. Most of the House Republican caucus is now made up of like-minded movement conservatives who loathe RINOs (Republicans In Name Only) and are eager to have DeLay get tough with the dwindling handful of Republican moderates.

On the Democratic side, progressives in recent decades have managed to oust a conservative incumbent only once, in 2000, when then-state Senator Hilda Solis successfully knocked off Matthew (Marty) Martinez in an east Los Angeles House district. Solis succeeded not because the House caucus acted but mainly because of the powerful Hispanic-labor alliance in L.A., which was fed up with Martinez and could deliver organized support to Solis. When she got to Congress, where Martinez had been a popular member of the Hispanic Caucus, Solis found herself initially shunned by some of her colleagues.

Nonetheless, a few more locally divisive primary challenges, paradoxically, might improve national party discipline—by giving pause to Democrats who keep voting Republican. A series of interviews suggests that this will have to happen mainly district by district, if at all, and not via the efforts of a divided and anxious House Democratic caucus, which could take tougher action but probably won't.

WHO ARE THESE RENEGADE DEMOCRATS AND WHY do they vote with the Bush administration? We have identified about 40 House Democrats who often vote with the White House and organized business on key pocketbook legislation. On the bankruptcy bill, fully 73 Democrats voted with Bush. It's understandable why those in socially conservative districts, mainly in the South and other rural areas, vote their districts on issues like guns, God, gays, and abortion. Their districts would probably go Republican if they didn't vote this way. Harder to defend, however, are northern and western Democrats, in safe Democratic seats, who choose to help Bush on pocketbook issues harmful to most of their constituents. Their reasons turn out to be one part money, one part fear (largely false) of losing their seats, and one part principled (very occasionally) centrism—all enabled by a paucity of party unity and discipline.

The accompanying chart narrows the group down to northern and western Democrats who voted with business and the White House on at least two of three key pocketbook issues. Several also voted for other Bush priorities such as CAFTA, the industry-written prescription-drug bill, oil drilling in Alaska's wildlife refuge, and the Bush tax cuts. Of these Democrats, only Melissa Bean, who narrowly ousted incumbent Phil Crane last year in a Republican-



Cashing In: Congressman Jim Matheson at an industry fund raiser

leaning suburban Chicago district, and Jim Matheson, of heavily Republican Utah, had good excuses, having won their seats in 2004 by scant margins. In this article, we focus on the Faithless 15 Democrats with the most pro-Republican records (the 17 northern and western Democrats minus Bean and Matheson) What makes them tick? How do they get away with it?

The Business Dems. Some Democratic representatives who often help Bush are centrists—principled, opportunist, or a little of both. “The DLC provides ideological cover,” says one liberal congressman, “for what are basically special-interest votes.” The Democratic Leadership Council seemingly offers a principled rationale for moderate Democrats to support “economic growth.” But in practice, many of the votes in question are merely narrow-interest bills sought

by business that do nothing for growth or employment. (The DLC supported the bankruptcy and tort bills, but not even the DLC, given its fiscal conservatism, endorsed estate-tax repeal.)

For example, the well-named Adam Smith represents the traditionally Democratic industrial area that includes part of Washington state's Tacoma, Renton, and the Sea-Tac International Airport. Running as a DLC poster boy, he took the seat back—winning by about 3 points—from Republican Randy Tate, who had captured it in the 1994 Gingrich landslide. Smith, who now enjoys a thoroughly safe seat, was one of just four Democrats who broke with his party and opposed changes to make the USA PATRIOT Act slightly less authoritarian. Recently, says one local activist, Smith's record has become more liberal because he has been getting increasingly vocal criticism at home from party activists from the labor/Howard Dean/progressive wing of the party. In this Congress, Smith pleasantly surprised some of his critics by voting against making the estate-tax repeal permanent and against the bankruptcy bill, but he did support tort reform.

Jane Harman of Los Angeles is another Democrat who captured a swing seat and turned it into a safe one. Now the ranking Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee, Harman has a lot of defense contractors in her district. She's a social liberal, but on economic issues, the *National Journal* rates her just 66-percent liberal. She sometimes casts industry special-interest votes, such as the bankruptcy and estate tax bills, and not because she has to but because she believes in them. She did vote against both repealing the estate tax and approving CAFTA, though she broke ranks with most Democrats to support Bush's version of trade-promotion authority.

Ruben Hinojosa, who represents the 15th District in Texas' Rio

Grande Valley, is in the food-processing business and is personally somewhat conservative. His brother, who runs the business day to day, is a prominent Republican. Hinojosa had an overwhelmingly Democratic seat until DeLay's redistricting in 2004, but even then he still won by a healthy 17 points. Bush carried the district but Hinojosa is very well entrenched. Nonetheless, he voted for the bankruptcy bill, tort reform, permanent estate-tax repeal, and drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Hinojosa is also known to barter pro-Bush votes for pork for his district. He voted for an earlier Bush trade bill only after fellow Texan DeLay promised earmarked funding for a job-training program, according to *The Almanac of American Politics*.

Henry Cuellar of Laredo, another of the Faithless 15, was formerly a Republican appointee to state office, and votes similarly. Silvestre Reyes of El Paso likewise voted for bankruptcy and caps on tort damages. Solomon Ortiz of Corpus Christi doesn't make our Faithless 15 list, but he did vote for the bankruptcy bill and CAFTA. Could these members have safely voted differently? Is it just that Hispanic voters are more conservative? There is some evidence that they are on social issues, but there is hardly a groundswell of support for tougher bankruptcy provisions or caps on damage awards in the Rio Grande Valley, where per-capita incomes are well below the national average. By contrast, Raul Grijalva of Arizona's 7th District, which runs south from Phoenix to the Mexican border, votes as a progressive.

According to Ernesto Cortés, the legendary organizer who helped found Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) in San Antonio, Latino voters need to hold their representatives in Congress accountable. "We need stronger progressive infrastructure on the ground," he says.

The Fearful. Some Democrats cast pro-administration votes because they consider themselves vulnerable. But that rationale is easily exaggerated. Several Democratic House seats would be swing districts if the incumbent retired or died, but they are also districts where the current member has used name recognition and service to the district to make the seat secure. Most northern and western Democrats in such 60-40 districts vote as progressives. But some run scared.

Brian Baird represents Washington's 3rd District, which runs south from the liberal state capital, Olympia, down to the counties that are part of suburban Portland, Oregon. Unlike Larsen, Baird, formerly a college professor of psychology, is personally quite liberal, according to a colleague. But local observers say that Baird was seared by his experience of only narrowly capturing the seat on his second try in 1998. So he considers himself perennially vulnerable and emphasizes his in-

dependence. In fact, in his recent re-election bids, Baird won by healthy, identical margins of 62 percent to 38 percent in 2002 and 2004. Nonetheless, he voted for bankruptcy and tort reform. "It's just not a swing seat," says a frustrated party activist. The longtime incumbent was Don Bonker, a stalwart liberal. "It's harder for the base to hold Baird accountable than Adam Smith," says this activist, "partly because the Portland papers don't really cover him."

Another New Dem, David Wu of Portland, succeeded a popular liberal, Elizabeth Furse, who retired. In the 1998 general election following a divisive primary, Republicans targeted the seat, and Wu won more narrowly than expected, 50 percent to 47 percent. Since then Wu has won by comfortably wide margins, prevailing by 20 points in 2004. But he continues to position himself as a centrist and to cast special-interest business votes.

The Mavericks. Some Democrats in fairly safe seats equate pro-Bush votes with independence from the party, which they trumpet as a political or personal virtue. In Minnesota's geographically enormous 7th District, which covers nearly the entire western part of the state, Collin Peterson regularly wins by margins of nearly 2 to 1—but often votes more like a Republican. He pilots his own plane, flies around the district without staff, and styles himself a rugged individualist. He once dated Katherine Harris. He voted with Republicans on Bill Clinton's showdown budget bill of 1993, perhaps the most important party-loy-

alty vote of the Clinton era. He was one of just 16 Democrats to back Bush's Medicare bill. He supports the Republican "fair tax," a national sales tax, and voted for the bankruptcy bill, estate-tax repeal, tort reform, and the tax cuts.

A frustrated Pelosi threatened to deny Peterson the position of ranking Democrat on the House Agriculture Committee in 2004. But Peterson promised more party loyalty, according to one insider, and got the job. "Peterson has been repeatedly chastised by the [state] party," says a leading Minnesota progressive activist. "At one point there was talk of withholding the party endorsement. But he likes to distance himself from the party, and the seat is his for life."

A kindred maverick is Dutch Ruppersberger, who represents Maryland's new and heavily Democratic 2nd District, which is centered in suburban Baltimore County. After the 2000 census provided a redistricting opportunity, Maryland's Democratic General Assembly, according to *The Almanac of American Politics*, literally designed the district for Ruppersberger, who had served both as a prosecutor and as Baltimore County executive (the job once held by Spiro Agnew). First elected in 2002, Rup-

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persberger won the seat last time with 67 percent of the vote. "I have the most conservative of the Democratic seats held by members of Congress from Maryland," he insists. "We were able to get the seat back because of my moderate record." Maybe; but John Kerry carried the district comfortably, 54 percent to 45 percent. Yet Ruppertsberger has one of the most pro-Republican records in the House on pocketbook issues. A personal friend of Charles Cawley, president of the financial giant MBNA, Ruppertsberger championed the bankruptcy bill and garnered \$17,250 from the financial industry. He also voted to cap lawsuits, and for estate-tax repeal. On his bankruptcy vote, Ruppertsberger explains, "It was a hard bill, and I put in several amendments that would exempt people with medical bills" from going bankrupt. His amendments lost, but he voted for the bill anyway.

The reapers. The overwhelming reason Democrats cast these pro-special-interest, pro-Bush votes, of course, is that such votes are richly rewarding. Ruppertsberger, for instance, is a reaper as well as a maverick. "Too many of the Democrats in the House focus too much attention on fund raising," says a progressive congressman from a swing district, "and not enough to attending to the base of the party and the needs of the people who they are representing." To some extent, all of the members with safe seats who cast special-interest votes are reapers, but there are differences of motivation and degree. "Some of our guys agonize over these votes," says another progressive congressman. "Others are just plain sleazy."

A prime reaper is Jim Moran of Washington, D.C.'s northern Virginia suburbs. This is an increasingly safe Democratic seat, with an electorate that voted for John Kerry nearly 2 to 1. Moran, however, is one of the most reliable Democratic business special-interest votes, having supported the bankruptcy and tort bills as well as CAFTA. In 1998, in debt to the tune of \$700,000 and juggling two dozen credit cards, he got a bailout loan from MBNA on terms not available to ordinary borrowers. Not long afterward, he fervently supported a tougher bankruptcy law for Americans not fortunate enough to have his connections. "The time-honored principle of moral responsibility and personal obligation to pay one's debts has been eroded by the convenience and ease with which one can discharge his or her obligations," he piously declared to a House subcommittee. Moran could well go

THE FAITHLESS FIFTEEN

These are the 15 Democrats, their states and districts, their margin of victory in 2004, and the Bush administration bills they supported. We looked at four key economic votes: CAFTA, the bankruptcy bill, estate-tax repeal, and tort "reform." We excluded Democrats from strongly Republican districts.

NAME	STATE, DISTRICT	2004 MARGIN	VOTED FOR
Robert Andrews	New Jersey 1st	50 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal
Brian Baird	Washington 3rd	24 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal Tort "reform"
Henry Cuellar	Texas 28th	20 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal Tort "reform" CAFTA
Jane Harman	California 36th	29 percent	Bankruptcy bill Tort "reform"
Darlene Hooley	Oregon 5th	9 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal
Ruben Hinojosa	Texas 15th	17 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal Tort "reform" CAFTA
Rick Larsen	Washington 2nd	30 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal Tort "reform"
Greg Meeks	New York 6th	Unopposed	Bankruptcy bill Tort "reform" CAFTA
Jim Moran	Virginia 8th	23 percent	Bankruptcy bill Tort "reform" CAFTA
Collin Peterson	Minnesota 7th	28 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal Tort "reform"
Nick Rahall	West Virginia 3rd	30 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal Tort "reform"
Silvestre Reyes	Texas 16th	37 percent	Bankruptcy bill Tort "reform"
Dutch Ruppertsberger	Maryland 2nd	36 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal Tort "reform"
David Wu	Oregon 1st	20 percent	Bankruptcy bill Tort "reform"
Albert Wynn	Maryland 4th	55 percent	Bankruptcy bill Estate-tax repeal

down in a primary, less because of his pro-business votes or conflicts of interest than due to the anger of Jewish groups. In March 2003, Moran intemperately blamed the Iraq War on "the strong support of the Jewish community." In 2004, he beat back primary challenger Andrew Rosenberg by a little more than 7,000 votes.

Among the most improbable faithless Democrats is Gregory Meeks of southeast Queens, New York. His is among the most reliably Democratic districts in the country. Yet Meeks voted with the White House on CAFTA, the bankruptcy bill, and tort reform. Several suburban New York Democrats who barely won close elections in truly swing districts have far more liberal voting records.

What explains Meeks? He is a protégé of his predecessor, the Reverend Floyd Flake, who built a huge, church-based economic empire and often worked with Republicans in order to get federal grants for his "faith-based" enterprises. [See Russ Baker, "The Ecumenist," *The American Prospect*, January 11-17, 2000.] Meeks is a member of Flake's congregation, which continues to do a lucrative business with the Bush administration. Meeks also took more money from the financial-services industry than from any other special-interest group. And Meeks got \$8,000 in campaign contributions from Pfizer Inc., which lobbied heavily for CAFTA because of its provisions on intellectual-property rules that stand to benefit pharmaceutical companies at the expense of generic-drug manufacturers. Business also buys influence with some black Democrats via the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, a 501(c)(3) arm of the black caucus that gets business donations from the tobacco, pharmaceutical, insurance, and other powerful industries.

Unlike, say, rural Minnesota or southern Washington state, New York City is a place with a very strong and politically engaged labor movement, as well as active poor people's organizations such as the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) and a feisty Working Families Party (WFP) that sometimes contests Democratic primaries. The WFP uses its endorsement as leverage and has developed a formidable vote-pulling operation, so much so that even Chuck Schumer and Hillary Clinton covet its support.

So how does Meeks get away with it? He may not. His district has pitifully low turnout—"You could topple Meeks in a primary with about 10,000 votes," says a WFP activist—and New York's progressives are reportedly seeking candidates to challenge him.

SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS ARE EVIDENT FROM THIS TOUR OF wayward Democrats. The most obvious is that Republicans enjoy a degree of party unity in Congress that Democrats do not. For all the blather from many political scientists about both parties moving to the extremes in recent years, the fact is that Republicans, because of their highly organized base and hardball leadership, have an ideological and disciplined national party to a far greater degree than Democrats.

The Democratic leadership is understandably eager to retain right-leaning districts held by Democratic incumbents, like Matheson of Utah and Peterson of Minnesota, as well as by surviving southern white Democrats like Alabama's Bud Cramer and Tennessee's Lincoln Davis. The leadership tends, appropriately, to cut these people a lot of slack. But it also indulges those with far fewer excuses.

As minority leader, Pelosi plainly lacks the perks of the majority party. But she is not completely without leverage. Members close to Pelosi say that she could take away some

chairmanships and withhold others. "But it's easier politically to do this at the beginning of a session," says one. "If you are supportive, you get invited to the strategy meetings, you get to be treated as a player. Guys who voted for CAFTA and bankruptcy, if they're not on good committees now, they're never going to be."

Furthermore, while campaign contributions are an important part of the story, they are far from the whole story. On pocketbook issues like the bankruptcy bill, conservative business groups are also very effective at lobbying. Groups like Public Citizen, ACORN, and the Public Interest Research Groups may mount heroic efforts on such bills, but they lack the lobbying muscle or the affiliated political action committees of big business.

At the grass roots and in Washington, labor remains a key player. Yet the unions do not always effectively use the power they still have. In reviewing the pattern of campaign contributions, we found that members who consistently voted against the Democratic-caucus position on pocketbook issues nonetheless got plenty of labor financial support. Democratic House members will face the music if they desert labor on live-or-die issues like the minimum wage or Davis-Bacon wage requirements. But only a few unions have made a priority of other pocketbook issues of interest to the working poor, like the bankruptcy bill, making it easier for Democratic freelancers to defy the caucus. The unions are so eager to hold Democratic seats (even those not in jeopardy) and to curry favor that they rarely punish wayward Democrats financially. An emblematic case is Rahm Emanuel, now the head of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Unions vowed to punish him when he first ran for Congress because of his pro-North American Free Trade Agreement work when he was an aide at the Clinton White House. But when Emanuel seemed a shoo-in for Illinois' 5th District in 2002, the unions ended up giving him a lot of money. Now, ironically, Emanuel, in his role as recruiter of Democratic congressional candidates, looks hard for business Democrats who can self-finance—the very people who vote for Republican pocketbook bills once they get to Congress.

Two promising new efforts at the grass roots have been hatched by the Campaign for America's Future, the Washington-based progressive-strategy organization. One is a new PAC, Progressive Majority, which aims to recruit and train progressive electoral candidates. The other is the Project for an Accountable Congress, which spotlights members of Congress of both parties with special-interest connections, running ads in their local papers. The project recently ran one in *The Jackson* (Tennessee) *Sun*, which covers the west Tennessee district of Democrat John Tanner, who resisted an effort to make it harder for Wal-Mart to violate child-labor laws. "Wal-Mart Knows a Bargain," began the ad, which pointed out that Tanner took \$17,500 in campaign contributions from the retail giant and also holds Wal-Mart stock.

In short, America today has one disciplined movement party and one party with many progressive representatives but a lot of freelancers, too. The Democratic caucus could be tougher on its turncoats. But the larger reality will change only when progressives get better organized at the base. **TAP**

A Perfect Storm?

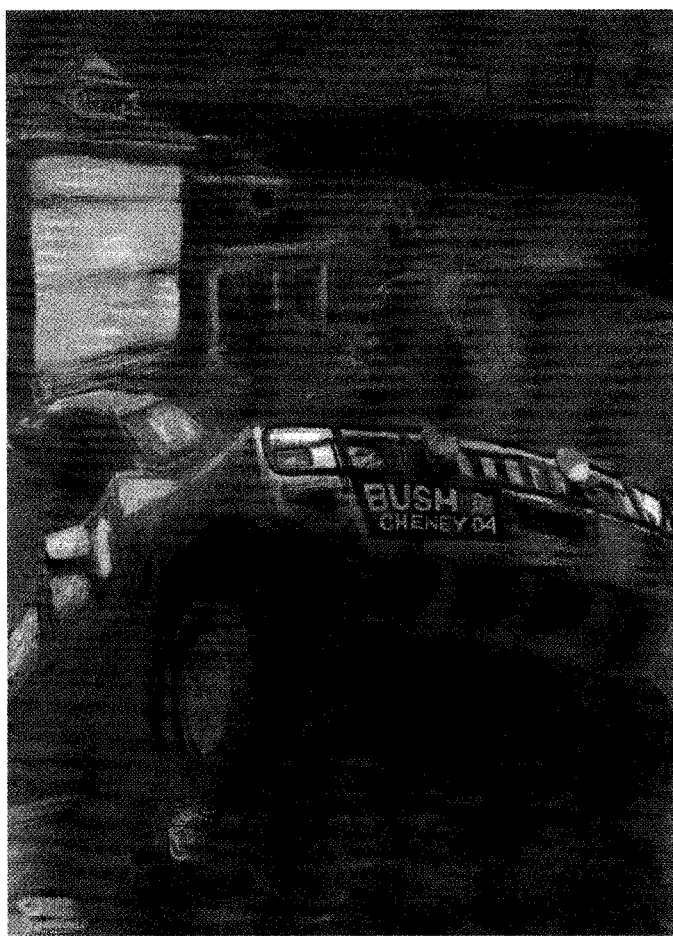
Katrina could lead to a political transformation, but we'll have to fight for the right kind of transformation. Great—this is just the fight we want.

BY MICHAEL TOMASKY

IS HURRICANE KATRINA A TRANSFORMATIVE POLITICAL moment? Is this finally the time when Americans appraise the failure of the Bush administration—that is, the failure of modern conservatism—and say, “Enough”? Can liberals seize the opportunity those failures represent to make a case for a different society, in which repeated warnings about the dangers facing a great city are mocked with budget cuts, in which citizens don’t go days without water and food—a society in which mutual and shared obligations are taken seriously? With the initial shock having faded, these are the important questions. Now comes a new moment, a time to take the administration’s Katrina failures and merge them into a broader case both *against* conservatism’s vision of society and *for* ours.

There was talk in Katrina’s immediate aftermath that yes, this is such a transformative moment. John Barry, author of *Rising Tide*, the story of the great Mississippi River flood of 1927 (the one Randy Newman memorialized in his lush, poignant song “Louisiana 1927”), appeared on various programs to discuss his book. Barry didn’t make the argument explicitly, but the hidden point of hauling him onto the shows was to suggest: The 1927 flood helped lead to the New Deal, because the lack of a unified response made the people back then realize that they needed the government to step in where the private sector would not. (A good sign: The 1997 book has jumped back on the best-seller lists.) Blogs of both the left and the right have overflowed with speculation about the politics of Katrina, and where the nation will go from here.

The Bush administration and its congressional henchpersons have been spinning like tops, working to ensure that the transformation goes in the direction they prefer: of less government, of responsibility thrown onto the states, of more penance owed by the poor and by workers, of more reliance on church-based charity, of consolidation of their movement’s power. It didn’t take George W. Bush long to suspend the Davis-Bacon Act, which protects wage rates on federal construction projects. The need to relocate schoolchildren led to renewed calls for school vouchers. In coming weeks, Republicans in Congress will surely be “revisiting” federal flood insurance and a host of other questions. At the same time, they’ll continue to try to brush away criticism by



saying that now is not the time for criticism, and they’ll rig the terms of the investigation into their own failures. Like the bank robber who blames the bank for having the money, the Republicans lost little time in using their own massive failure to assert that government can’t work. The posturing has been at times surreal, giving the post-Katrina period an eerily banana-republic sort of gloss—the constitutional democratic version of, say, Anastasio Somoza’s response to the Nicaraguan earthquake of 1972, when he appointed a commission to look into the government’s failures that was chaired by ... Anastasio Somoza.

Atypically, in the first two weeks after the disaster, the White House's spinning was recognized as such by a newly emboldened news media. But we have seen in Iraq and with regard to September 11 how the administration's resolve can wear the opposition down, take it by surprise; more than once have its lies, repeated over and over, defeated fact. It won't be easy, fighting all that *and* building the more important positive case for a government that takes its obligations to its citizens seriously. There is great goodness and generosity in the American people, one by one. But can we, after 25 years of ideological hypnotism, call upon a shared sense of a *common* good in which we all have a stake?

If we want a democratic and egalitarian transformation to come out of Katrina, we have to fight for it. And we have to fight what for the past two decades has been, for liberals—or at least for Democrats—an uncomfortable fight. To be sure, we should perform forensics on the cronyism, incompetence, callousness,

spiritual nourishment should come first for the less fortunate. This thinking got the attention of George W. Bush's advisers in the late '90s and made Olasky the godfather, as it were, of "compassionate conservatism" (funny, we haven't heard that phrase invoked since Katrina, have we?).

The unvarnished message of Olasky's work was that poverty is a moral issue, and hence that the poor are by definition of weak moral character. This belief is almost never stated publicly, but it courses through conservatism's veins. So, a situation like the one that developed in New Orleans, with Homeland Security Department Secretary Michael Chertoff and former Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Director Michael Brown both unaware that people were trapped in the Superdome and convention center, is in one part a matter of their incompetence (there was certainly incompetence on the part of state and local officials; Louisiana Democrats will never be confused with Platonic philosopher-kings). But in a greater part, such an insouciant posture by high government officials is inevitable after 25 years of such thinking. If you're poor or black, don't own a car, live in the low part of town because that's what you can afford, or perhaps couldn't get away because you worked the late shift and your boss wouldn't let you go that night—tough. You were there in the first place because of your own moral deficiency. The ignorance of Chertoff

We must make the big-picture case based on core principles, and show how the very tenets of modern conservatism made the consequences of Katrina far worse than they might have been.

and catastrophically tone-deaf management that set the stage for this scandal. But we should do more than criticize and call for investigations—more, even, than suggest counterproposals to address the crisis. We must, finally, make the big-picture case based on core principles, and show how the very tenets of modern *conservatism* made Katrina's consequences far worse than they might have been. The opportunity to draw a clear, connecting line between ideological belief and practical failure has never been greater.

OF THE SEVERAL CENTRAL PRECEPTS OF MODERN MOVEMENT conservatism, three played crucial roles here: first, its sanctification of the individual and concomitant rejection of the community as the foundational unit of social organization (except for religious communities, which are to substitute for political action and social investment); second, its glorification of the corporation—indeed its attempt to model the government on the corporation (although on a very inefficient, corrupted idea of the corporation); and third, its utter anti-empiricism—its ability to deny any fact that is not either presented in a "study" paid for by the oil industry or insisted upon by those greatest of all deniers of fact, the Christian right.

Modern conservatism's veneration of the individual goes back at least to the economist Ludwig von Mises, but, for present purposes, let's trace the line of argument back to a man named Marvin Olasky. In books like *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, Olasky made the case throughout the 1980s and '90s that the welfare state had failed the poor—and that *the poor* had failed the poor. The honey that made it possible to peddle this medicine in respectable quarters was the idea that a program of

and Brown does not indicate that they are evil men. They undoubtedly are not. Rather, their words indicate that they are in thrall to an ideology that tells them that the whole of society—the black and the poor and the lame; in other words, the inconvenient—is just not their responsibility.

The inconvenient, according to Republican ideology, will be taken care of by religious charities—our new "government." It's a nice idea, and it gives Bush an opportunity to feint toward piety. And, of course, churches—right-wing ones included—do wonderful charitable work. But they will never substitute for the federal government. The government will spend \$200 billion on Katrina; churches, all told, a fraction of that at best. In addition, the great religious awakening of the last 20 years has not gone, in this respect, as advertised: Net charitable giving, though it flourishes at times like these, has just about kept pace with the gross domestic product.

As to glorification of the corporation: On September 7, David Ignatius of *The Washington Post* wrote a column analogizing Bush to a CEO (an incompetent CEO). Good start. But the analogy goes much deeper than Ignatius took it, and applies not just to Bush but to the ideology. What it *really* means is that conservatism sees America not as a nation but as a corporation. This means, in turn, that we are not citizens but shareholders; and that we're not really equal, because shareholders are not (the more power you have, the more you deserve). This worldview—more than fear or lassitude or anything having to do with his personality—is what explains Bush's slow personal response: When a corporation faces a crisis, the CEO must protect the price first; he must demonstrate to the

Continued on page 25

THE AMERICAN **Prospect**

LIBERAL INTELLIGENCE

SPECIAL REPORT
OCTOBER 2005

ARE YOU PAYING ATTENTION NOW?

The environmental crisis and the
rebirth of progressive politics



WITH ARTICLES BY
ROSS GELBSPAN
BILL McKIBBEN
CARL POPE
MARK SCHMITT
ADAM WERBACH
AMANDA GRISCOM LITTLE
REP. JAN SCHAKOWSKY
TED NORDHAUS &
MICHAEL SHELLENBERGER
AND MORE

Catching the Wave

HURRICANE KATRINA WAS FIRST and foremost an environmental event. Experts can debate whether it was an early casualty of global warming or merely a harbinger of what every reputable climate scientist predicts will happen if we don't radically change. Even without global warming, it is a warning to take Mother Nature seriously. If your city is below sea level, it is not smart to neglect infrastructure.

Katrina, speaking of infrastructure, is also a political wake-up call. Before the hurricane struck, we were preparing this special report to mark the one-year anniversary of a grenade in essay form titled "The Death of Environmentalism." The authors, Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, who write our closing article, basically contended that the environmental movement had failed to achieve its own goals because it had failed to transform politics.

In these pages, John Meyer and Mark Schmitt weigh in on the "Death" contro-

versy, but mostly this report looks forward. How can new progressive coalitions, environmentalists, and others broaden popular consciousness, outflank the blockage in Washington, think more creatively, and build for the future?

The "Death" paper was not really about environmentalism. The same analysis could be leveled at the progressive failure to gain traction on health insurance, reproductive rights, the Supreme Court, or foreign policy. This attack was partly fair, partly hyperbole. Almost by definition, the right is winning because progressives have failed to win over public opinion and to strategically maximize available intellectual and political resources. So the reaction of many to the "Death" paper was, "Thanks, we needed that."

At the same time, however, winning back America while the corporate, religious, media, cultural, financial, and political right are fused into a strategic machine is just plain hard. As that sage Tom Hanks immortally said in *A League*

of Our Own, if it was easy, everyone would do it. The "Death" authors insist that narrow-issue movements fail because everything connects to everything else. Fair enough. But their critics turn the point around on them. Are these authors merely one-trick iconoclasts, or will they join the struggle and do politics? For if you do politics, you necessarily assemble allies. And if you habitually spray contempt on the whole field, nobody comes to your party.

Hearteningly, the dynamic duo are now working with Senator Barack Obama on an imaginative plan to reinvent the U.S. auto industry. It includes socializing health-care costs as a strategy of competitiveness. The idea is not to pass legislation but to change political consciousness by linking energy, health, and competitiveness, and to shame and expose opponents. It's a brilliant idea—and it will require a little humility and respect for coalition partners, or Obama, who dwells in the real word of politics, will be gone.

We surely need to link our best thinkers and our best doers, to build a language of both mutual challenge and respect. And soon, because the waters are rising. **TAP**

— ROBERT KUTTNER

SPECIAL REPORT THE ENVIRONMENT: DEATH AND REBIRTH

A3 *Ross Gelbspan* considers global climate change in a post-Katrina world, plus the Bush administration's troubling pattern of deniability; *John Meyer* asks whether progressives can tie environmentalism to the everyday lives of Americans; *Mark Schmitt* fine-tunes *The Death of Environmentalism's* premise.

A10 **Changing the Climate**
Why a new approach to global warming would make for a better politics—and planet. *By Bill McKibben*

A13 **Laboratories of Progress**
Increasingly and in bipartisan fashion, state and local governments are addressing the nation's disastrous energy and climate-change policy. *By Jim Marzilli*

A16 **Shooting the Moon**
The Apollo Alliance's grand vision for energy independence may be a distant legislative goal, but it can help transform politics right now.
By Amanda Griscom Little

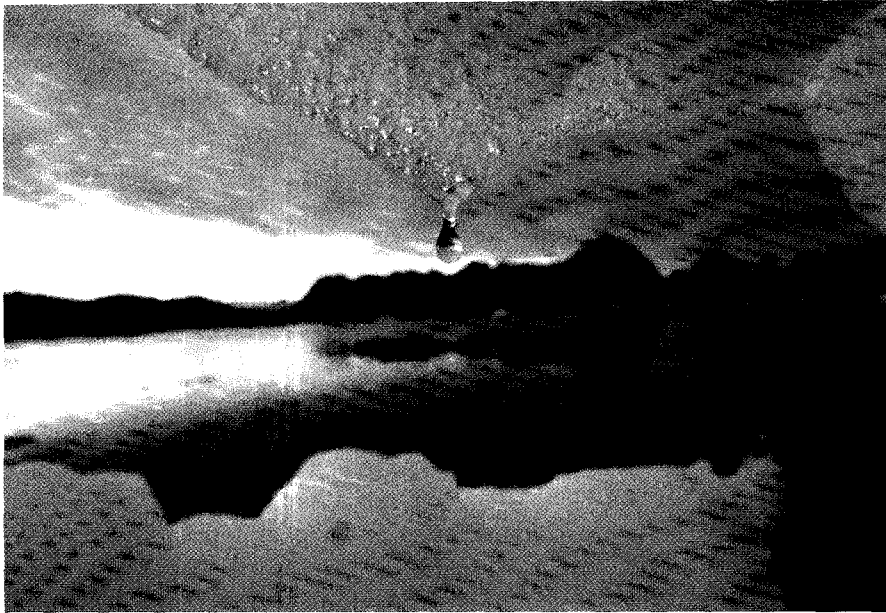
A19 **The End of the Population Movement**
Our challenge isn't population control. It's sustainable development and women's rights. *By Adam Werbach*

A22 **A New Environmentalism**
Could a new green ethic provide common cause in a deeply divided country? *By Carl Pope*

A24 *Geoffrey Lomax, Eric Roberts, and Paul English* on tackling the urban asthma crisis; *Gloria Totten* on the emergence of a progressive majority; *Jan Schakowsky* on the organizing challenges for 21st-century progressivism.

A29 **Death Warmed Over**
Beyond environmentalism: imagining possibilities as large as the crisis that confronts us
By Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus

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Global Denial

Katrina is a portent. But will it cause Americans to embrace fundamental change in how we consume energy and understand politics?

BY ROSS GELBSPAN

AS FLOODWATERS RECEDE AND bodies emerge, Americans are belatedly making some terrible connections about the Bush administration, which has a contempt for public planning matched only by its habit of subordinating reality to public relations. One aspect, of course, is Iraq. The other is the needless tragedy in New Orleans.

The Hurricane Katrina disaster is also a curtain-raiser for the largest-ever challenge to public planning: the consequences of global warming. If the present complacency continues, we will see more flooding, more breakdown of democratic civil order, more loss of human life and dignity, and more vivid divisions between rich and poor.

The parallel with Iraq is worth a moment's further reflection. In spring of 2002, in anticipation of the invasion of Iraq, the State Department consulted with about 200 leaders of Iraqi civil society—lawyers, engineers, businesspeople, and others, all of whom detested Saddam Hussein. The group warned Thomas Warrick, then a State Depart-

ment adviser, that absent a well-conceived and carefully executed post-invasion plan, chaos would ensue, nullifying any stability the Americans hoped to establish.

With Warrick's guidance, the group worked out strategies to facilitate the least disruptive transition possible. When the State Department presented the plan to the White House, it was informed by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld that the president wanted no such plan. The Iraqis, according to the White House, would be so grateful to their liberators for the overthrow of the hated Hussein regime that they would establish their own democratic order and reconstruction program. Essentially, the State Department officials were told to take their plan and shove it.

OUR LATEST NATIONAL TRAGEDY HAS been widely predicted for decades. With even a modest degree of planning, its impacts could have been drastically minimized. For years the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has warned that New

Orleans could not withstand anything more than a relatively weak (Category 3) hurricane. Ten years ago, when an intense rainstorm killed six people in the city, the corps asked Congress to provide the \$430 million it had authorized to shore up levees and pumping stations. Little of that money ever materialized.

Last year, *The (New Orleans) Times-Picayune* reported that the Corps of Engineers had determined that the Bush administration was spending less than 20 percent of what was needed to complete the fortification of the city's levees. While the massive destruction of Katrina left Americans in shock, it should have been no surprise to the federal government. In 2001, the Federal Emergency Management Agency cited a hurricane strike on New Orleans as one of the three most likely U.S. disasters. Nevertheless, by 2004 the Bush administration had cut funding to the corps' New Orleans district by more than 80 percent, as Sidney Blumenthal reported in a recent *Salon* article.

Earlier this year, the Louisiana congressional delegation got Congress to provide about \$60 million for flood protection for the city. But the Bush administration reduced that figure to \$10.4 million, according to Newhouse News Service.

While the Bush administration was cutting funding to strengthen protective dikes and levees, the state's bipartisan congressional delegation was also working to secure money for the restoration of its coastal wetlands to buffer the impacts of storm surges. Louisiana officials estimated this effort could cost \$14 billion, but the lawmakers managed to secure only a tiny fraction—\$570 million over four years, according to *The Times-Picayune*. The requested multiyear, \$14 billion, appropriation was all but erased from the administration's energy bill. So in order to save in the short term for disaster prevention, the administration's lack of planning has yielded what will likely top \$100 billion in damages—and most of it uninsured.

OMINOUSLY, THE MOST MASSIVE casualty of the Bush administration's studied aversion to planning still lies in

the future. New Orleans—like the Netherlands, south Florida, coastal Bangladesh, and other low-lying population centers around the world—is especially vulnerable to hurricanes, intense storms, and sea surges. In contrast to New Orleans, the Dutch have created an elaborate system of canals, dikes, seawalls, and pumps to protect the Netherlands from extreme flooding. To the Dutch—and to most of the rest of the world—the increasing likelihood of devastating natural events constitutes an irrefutable mandate for planning.

Sea levels have been rising twice as quickly over the last 10 years as they were during the previous century, according to recent measurements by NASA satel-

come 50-percent more intense over the past 30 years, according to Professor Kerry Emanuel of MIT. That increase is due to ocean warming and the resulting changes in wind patterns. While global warming doesn't increase the number of hurricanes, it makes them markedly stronger as ocean surface temperatures rise, because warming water provides the fuel for the storms.

When Katrina glanced off south Florida, it was a Category 1 storm, with wind speeds of about 70 miles per hour. But when it moved across the superheated Gulf of Mexico, with surface temperatures exceeding 80 degrees Fahrenheit, it swelled into a 170-mile-per-hour megastorm before making landfall east of New Orleans.

Kartrina was a dress rehearsal for more serious environmental calamities to come. Can we change the way we understand the environment and politics?

lites. That rise is propelled more or less equally by a steady infusion of water from melting glaciers and icecaps and by the thermal expansion of the oceans themselves (as water heats, it expands).

All of this is attributable to the rising levels of heat-trapping carbon dioxide in our atmosphere, which catches heat traditionally radiated back into space. Those atmospheric carbon levels, which had stabilized at about 280 parts per million (ppm) for 10,000 years, have risen, since the Industrial Revolution, to 380 ppm—a level this planet has not experienced for at least 420,000 years—as our burning of coal and oil has accelerated.

As a result, the planet's historical temperature equilibrium has been thrown out of balance, with the earth becoming a net importer of heat. "There can no longer be genuine doubt that human-made gases are the dominant cause of [global] warming. This energy imbalance is the 'smoking gun' we have been looking for," said NASA's James Hansen, one author of the "heat balance" study published this spring in the journal *Science*.

One consequence of the heating of the planet is that tropical storms have be-

Regrettably, President Bush's anti-planning propensity seems immune to the physical changes overtaking the planet. When the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) listed the potential impacts of climate change in the United States on its Web site in a document known as "The National Assessment on Climate Change," the White House ordered the EPA to remove or alter all references to the dangers of global warming. The president dismissed the meticulously researched document, which took four years to prepare and review, as a frivolous "product of bureaucracy." In fact, it represents the findings of more than 2,000 scientists from 100 countries reporting to the United Nations in what is the largest and most rigorously peer-reviewed scientific collaboration in history.

The findings of that scientific body, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, gave rise in 1997 to an international plan to help our climate stabilize. The plan, known as the Kyoto Protocol, was signed by then-President Bill Clinton but never ratified by the U.S. Senate. In its first iteration, the protocol called on the world's industrial nations to curb carbon emissions—by some 7 percent below

1990 levels—by 2012. One of Bush's first acts as president was to withdraw America from the Kyoto Protocol.

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, IT HAS BECOME overwhelmingly apparent that climate change is accelerating faster than scientists had anticipated even a decade ago. As a result, the delegates to the Kyoto Protocol (which has now been ratified by more than 150 nations) are planning to speed up the timetable and ramp up the emissions-reduction goals dramatically—unless the Bush administration succeeds in scuttling the entire process.

In response to the scientific consensus finding that humanity needs to reduce its use of carbon fuels by 70 percent in a very short time, the Netherlands is already implementing a plan to curb emissions by 80 percent in 40 years. Tony Blair has committed Britain to carbon cuts of 60 percent in 50 years. Germany has vowed a 50-percent reduction in 50 years. Earlier this year, French President Jacques Chirac called on the entire industrial world to cut emissions by 75 percent by 2050.

By contrast, the response of the Bush administration has been to take dead aim at the United Nations as the world's coordinating agency on climate change. Shortly after Paul Wolfowitz was installed as director of the World Bank, he declared that the institution would make climate change a priority, promising massive investments in new coal technology. (Coal, with the heaviest carbon concentration of all fuels, is the most potent contributor to global warming of all fossil fuels.)

Following a year of secret negotiations, Bush then announced a pact with Australia, the world's largest coal exporter, and several other countries to develop "clean coal." This purely voluntary agreement not only contradicts the binding goals of the Kyoto Protocol; it also ignores the fact that one cannot clean the carbon out of coal. No matter how much coal is "cleaned," it will continue to fuel the warming of the planet.

Finally, of course, the president appointed as our new ambassador to the United Nations one John Bolton, a diplo-

mat who has been consistently antagonistic to much of the UN's body's work. Because a more aggressive UN-sponsored Kyoto Protocol does not fit the president's preconceived agenda, his strategy boils down to sabotaging the authority of the United Nations in the area of climate change.

To the president, this sounds like a plan. To the rest of us, it seems a fast track to climate hell. **TAP**

Ross Gelbspan, a retired journalist, is author of The Heat Is On and Boiling Point, and creator of the Web site www.heatisonline.org.

The Afterlife of Environmentalism

Can we tie big global concerns to the everyday lives of Americans?

BY JOHN M. MEYER

A YEAR AGO, TWO COMMITTED activists with serious credentials in the environmental movement released a report proclaiming "the death of environmentalism." In so doing, they sparked a debate that continues to this day. While some have suggested that both the authors and their accusations emerged from nowhere, they in fact put a spotlight on some recurrent, yet seldom influential, criticisms leveled by minority voices within the movement. If these criticisms are correct (and in large measure I think that they are), the environmental movement, and the progressive left of which it is a part, will need to be remade in ways that go beyond a mere tinkering with policies, personnel, or priorities. This critique demands changes not only in what environmental organizations *do* but also in what they *are*.

Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus released "The Death of Environmentalism" in October 2004 at the annual gathering of environmental grant-makers (the people who allocate the foundation money that keeps most environmental groups afloat). It soon took on a life of its own, thrashing about widely on the Internet and garnering mainstream media attention earlier this year.

The title alone guaranteed attention, and releasing it at the big grant-makers' conference was enough to provoke many environmental leaders. Following the No-

vember election, the general malaise among American progressives also opened greater space for heterodox voices.

And yet in assessing the obstacles to a progressive majority, the environmental movement would seem to be an odd place to begin. Unlike organized labor, for instance, the membership rolls of the big

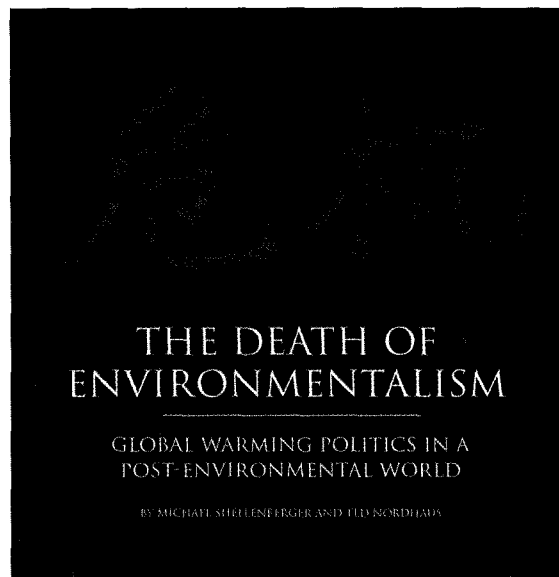
for environmental protection—levels that would be the envy of many progressive movements. So what's the problem?

For one thing, as Shellenberger and Nordhaus make clear, the same polls that identify high levels of public support for environmental protection also reveal that support to be shallow. Americans care about "the environment," but when faced with competing demands on their time, money, and attention, they don't appear to care all that much. For another thing, membership and organizational growth are not tied—or sometimes seem inversely tied—to success in advancing an agenda that now includes halting climate change, protecting species diversity, reducing toxic exposure, and other awesome challenges. Indeed, landmark legislative victories such as the National Environmental Policy, the Clean Air and Water acts, and the Endangered Species acts were all accomplished more than a generation ago, at a time when the movement was much less institutionalized.

While the shallowness of support for environmentalism is a key problem, it doesn't represent a change from the past. The increasing difficulty in advancing an agenda—despite growing movement sophistication—clearly does. It suggests that simply "more"—more money, more organizing, more experts—is unlikely to enable the movement to once again win big.

It might seem reassuring if we could pin the blame for this change on George W. Bush, or perhaps on the Republican takeover of Congress in the '90s. This partisan roadblock certainly makes even incremental progress more difficult.

Yet the slowing of environmentalist progress predates both. Environmentalists were running into increasingly sophisticated opposition even during the Carter administration. Some has been from forthright opponents of environmentalism—for example, the "sagebrush rebellion" and later the "wise use" movement, which have fought government regulation and ownership of western lands. Such efforts have sought—with modest success—to create a cultural di-



national environmental organizations have grown—at least fourfold over the past 25 years. The result is bigger budgets and staff, plus more in-house expertise. New statewide and local organizations have also emerged during this period. Environmentalism has a further advantage: Unlike the reproductive-rights movement, for instance, it does not polarize public opinion. Despite some fluctuation, polls consistently show high levels of support

vide, characterizing environmentalists as effete urbanites out of touch with those who actually work for a living. Yet as I noted, they have never successfully polarized public opinion. The more powerful roadblock has come from the growing presence and skill of opponents—in industry and elsewhere—who give lip service to environmental aims but maintain that the economic and social costs are too high and use their power to block implementation.

Richard Nixon signed most of the last generation's environmental legislation into law. He didn't do it because of an ardent sympathy for the cause. Instead, he appears to have regarded environmentalism as a nuisance more easily minimized by approving these bills than opposing

by focusing on the chemicals that are a primary cause of ozone depletion, the movement largely succeeded in getting safer substitutes adopted. Yet on many other issues, success can only come from connecting environmentalists' concerns with a vision for the future that can inspire broad and deep commitment among citizens. But organizational leaders and staffers engage in a "policy literalism" that obliges them to focus narrowly on the policy at hand, ignoring or downplaying its integral connection to broader social and economic contexts. Thus, say the authors, environmentalists assume "that to win action on global warming, one must talk about global warming instead of, say, the economy, industrial policy, or health care."

Two changes are needed: to elevate "politics" as a discussion about values and to reconnect "environment" to the realm of everyday concerns about life and livelihood.

them. That attitude was only possible to the extent that environmental concerns were regarded as discrete "issues" not deeply intertwined with broader social, economic, and political concerns. Since the late '70s, the well-organized opposition has made this strategy untenable.

Today, we have less reason to be sanguine about the effectiveness of the regulatory approaches central to the legislation of the 1970s. Moreover, many of today's greatest challenges are global, making a national legislative strategy less effective. But most striking—and ironic—is the fact that it is not environmentalists but their opponents who have been more successful in maintaining that (to borrow an ecological truism) "everything is connected." In unpacking these dilemmas, Shellenberger and Nordhaus open up some of the most interesting and provocative topics for discussion.

SHELLENBERGER AND NORDHAUS advance two primary criticisms of contemporary environmentalism. The first is that environmentalists are mired in technocratic wonkery. In some cases this approach has worked. For example,

With this in mind, we can better understand Shellenberger and Nordhaus' accusation that environmentalists act "as though politics didn't matter." When environmentalists place faith in both scientific and administrative expertise to solve problems, they consign to politics the pressuring of decision-makers to enable professionals to get on with the job. Shellenberger and Nordhaus are not wholly explicit about this in their report, but I think that they want to elevate politics to a far more vital and constructive role—presenting a vision of the good life and discussing how societies ought to be organized. The alternative would be to read their appeal to politics as a far less elevated call for better spin of environmental initiatives. Only by adopting the former position can they reject "policy literalism" and also refute the charge that they are disingenuous marketeers, proposing merely to put old environmental wine in new bottles.

Of course, the problem is not unique to environmentalism—and that's the point. In the absence of a compelling progressive political vision, policies promoting labor, universal health care, reproductive

rights, investment in education, gay rights, or a host of other concerns are formulated in isolation and crafted to resonate with distinct constituencies. The political calculus will inevitably focus upon whether these policies are adopted and implemented, rather than whether they build public support for a broader vision. The right, the authors argue, has been effective precisely because it has advanced this sort of political vision, while the left appears as a makeshift coalition of particular issues and interests (of which environmentalism is just one).

One defense against this charge is to note that progressive organizations typically do join in coalition with one another to achieve broader objectives. This was evident during the 2004 election. Yet Shellenberger and Nordhaus' criticism runs deeper than this. They argue that these coalitions typically highlight the thinness of any common vision by calling attention to its instrumental character. Each group joins in because its members believe that "their" issues will be advanced and that the message they send to their constituencies reflects this belief. Widespread public concerns thus come to be construed as narrow "special interests."

There's nothing particularly original about this description. For a generation, political scientists have put forward similar concepts such as "administrative rationalism" and "interest-group liberalism" to discuss it. Yet it provides a salient basis for rethinking progressive politics at this juncture because it calls our attention to the degree of fragmentation among progressive organizations and constituencies at a moment of almost total political blockage.

THE SECOND CRITICISM LEVELED BY Shellenberger and Nordhaus is more specific to environmentalism, although analogies to other movements can be made. Here, they level what, on the face of it, is the counterintuitive claim that "the environmental community's belief that their power derives from defining themselves as defenders of 'the environment' has prevented us from winning" They go on to argue that "environmentalism is today more about protecting a supposed

'thing'—'the environment'—than advancing the worldview articulated by Sierra Club founder John Muir who nearly a century ago observed, 'When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.'

Now what could be wrong with defining the movement as "defenders of the environment"? Surely this seems like a popular way of framing the concern; few people, after all, intentionally position themselves as "destroyers of the environment." Moreover, as Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope put it in a blistering criticism of Shellenberger and Nordhaus, "Without being too precious, the environment is a real thing. There is a global carbon cycle, human interventions are a small if meaningful part of the evolutionary process, Homo sapiens depend upon a complex web of both geochemical and biological processes."

And yet this point, too, has a history that predates Shellenberger and Nordhaus' salvo. It has been brewing for many years in a variety of activist and academic circles. One source of this critique is from promising new movements that have come into prominence over the past couple of decades. The "environmental justice" organizations that emerged in poor and minority communities (to connect local environmental hazards to broader social injustices) and the "collaborative conservation" groups (which have worked to sustain rural livelihood and restore watersheds in the American West) are in many ways quite disparate. Yet both begin from concerns with livelihood and places close at hand, rather than distant and seemingly abstract concerns. Both have also challenged the role of scientific and policy-making experts and managers, putting greater faith in the role of ordinary citizens to address concerns that are deeply familiar to them. When environmentalism is enmeshed with everyday life and concerns, it is better understood as relational than as protecting a "thing."

Defining environment as a thing allows it to be perceived as peripheral from everyday life and livelihood. Shellenberger and Nordhaus convincingly argue that this framing helps explain the shallowness of public support. Generating more

information, or devising more creative or ambitious public-education campaigns, will do little to increase public salience so long as this perception remains in place.

IT SEEMS UNDERSTANDABLE AND ALMOST inevitable—even in the face of the undeniable setbacks and frustrations of recent years—that organizational leaders would be wary of such calls for transformation. Shellenberger and Nordhaus have fed this wariness in the past year by being quick to shoot down—but slow to build up—ideas for viable new progressive projects, and by often seeming to tar nearly all members of a very diverse movement with the same broad brush. In adopting this posture, they have appeared dismissive of the very real risks that dramatic change necessarily entails and of many promising, concrete initiatives. They have thus left themselves open to the charge that they are mainly critics who come up short in providing practical strategies to carry out their vision. They often seem stuck in their role as the "bad boys" of environmentalism, as Bill McKibben has put it, promising only that a more complete reconstructive vision will be found in their forthcoming book.

I don't think we need to wait for the book. In part, this is because environmentalism is not as monolithic as Shellenberger and Nordhaus suggest. Their criticisms adhere more firmly to the big national organizations than to a variety of smaller-scale initiatives, often found at the state and local levels. These initiatives hint to an alternative. As I suggested above, the promising efforts are those that break down dichotomies between human communities and the environment while highlighting the question that everyone has the ability to address: What sort of life do we want for our children and our society?

To date, such initiatives, many of which are described elsewhere in this special issue, have primarily confronted local concerns. There is good reason to wonder whether they can be scaled up effectively. Even if they can, however, some will fear that this approach will weaken rather than strengthen environmental advocacy; that it will dilute the focus and persuasiveness of a form of rhetoric dependent

for their power upon scary images of limits and crisis.

While they don't present it in their white paper, Shellenberger and Nordhaus do suggest a way to respond to this fear. In public talks they have given over the past year, as well as in a published speech by their colleague Adam Werbach, they describe focus groups facilitated by pollster Nordhaus in Ohio and Pennsylvania. They point to evidence that popular support can deepen if the concerns for global warming are persuasively tied to the everyday concerns of citizens and to their hopes for a better future. By focusing on community investment as a means of promoting clean energy, support for such concerns connects not just with a generalized sympathy for the environment but also resonates with a far more salient concern for the future of families and communities.

If these findings can be consistently replicated (as I suspect they can), Shellenberger and Nordhaus' critical project becomes a reconstructive one. The conversation about environmental concerns becomes integral to economy and society in a way that it rarely is at the present. This is not an effort to change public attitudes. Instead, it is a change intended to bring the progressive agenda into closer contact with public attitudes that are already sympathetic, yet tepid. Only by doing so might the public be mobilized in a way that can effectively counter an increasingly sophisticated opposition.

In sum, two sorts of change are needed. One is to elevate "politics" as a discussion about values and a constructive vision for the future. Another is to reconnect "environment" to the realm of everyday concerns with quality of life and livelihood. By pursuing both these aims, we can build a more powerful movement to promote the well-being of communities and ecosystems together. **TAP**

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We're All Environmentalists Now

It isn't environmentalism that died. What expired was progressive politics based on single-issue interest groups.

BY MARK SCHMITT

FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY, "The Death of Environmentalism" hit last year with the force of a tsunami, leaving its audience so taken aback by its sweeping, cocksure condemnation of their decades of selfless struggle that they could barely think about it rationally, even when they accepted its basic truth.

On the other hand, among progressives who don't situate their lives primarily in the world of the greens, the essay crept to attention more slowly, rather like global warming itself. Almost a year later, I am still periodically sent a copy, along with a breathless "Have you read this?" note. Not only did I read it, I point out; I tried to call attention to it outside the environmental community back in March, predicting that "it may be the most powerful and lasting of the very many 'What's wrong with the left?' documents of the George W. Bush era."

Rereading the essay after a year, it seems even clearer that "The Death of Environmentalism" was less a condemnation of the environmental movement than a call to all progressives to think more like environmentalists—and for professional environmentalists to think less like Washington lobbyists. The essay's greatest gift was its critique of "policy literalism," the process by which activists identify a distinct problem, define it as an "environmental" one, seek the proximate cause, propose a solution, and then mobilize their experts, their lobbyists, and their public-relations machines around that solution.

In the most provocative section of their essay, Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, proposed that rather than defining the problem of global warming as "too much carbon in the atmosphere." The problem should be redefined as:

- the radical right's control of all three

branches of the U.S. government;

- trade policies that undermine environmental protections;
- our failure to articulate an inspiring and positive vision;
- overpopulation;
- the influence of money in American politics;
- our inability to craft legislative proposals that shape the debate around core American values;
- poverty; and
- old assumptions about what the problem is and what it isn't

In my response this past spring [see "Death and Resurrection," *TAP Online*, March 30, 2005], I half-mocked this sweeping list, along with a suggestion from another expert quoted in the essay that the only solution for global warming is "real campaign-finance reform," as if the authors were offering to swap one hard political problem for a less familiar one. (If you've been working on global warming for a decade, campaign-finance reform looks simple and fun, but the reverse is also true.)

But in retrospect, I think I, too, missed the point. It wasn't to redefine one issue as another. That's just "policy literalism" with a new mask. Rather, it was a call to define all the circumstances that we face in a unitary, systemic way, because in fact they are integrally related. And only by seeing them in that way can we address them coherently as a movement.

SHELLENBERGER AND NORDHAUS revealed a death, but it was not that of environmentalism as an idea. Rather, it is interest-group pluralism, the model of liberal advocacy under which all of us over 30 were raised, that is finished. The environmental movement—much like groups that advocate for health policy or children or gun control or civil liberties

or housing or campaign-finance reform—was created on the assumptions of pluralism: Democratic government, usually in some bipartisan fashion, would take the claims of advocates for individual causes, find balance where they conflicted, and allocate resources based on the power—electoral, moral, popular, financial, legal, or scientific—of competing claims. The mission for any individual issue-advocacy group in this game was to develop popular support, media visibility, or political clout to offset the strength of direct opponents. Citizenship meant directing your energies and some money around a particular issue, or perhaps two, that you chose as a priority. If you were moved by the direct-mail appeals of the Sierra Club, you became an environmentalist; if it was NARAL's package that caught your attention, you were a pro-choice voter, and these allegiances defined citizenship for many Americans more strongly than any political party.

Membership organizations are not the only avenue for interest-group pluralism, of course. Much social change has been achieved through litigation or through impartial technical expertise brought to bear on the regulatory or legislative process. These approaches were the main subject of critique in "The Death of Environmentalism," and these tend also to be single-issue strategies promoted by foundations.

Interest-group pluralism has always had its critics, who note that issues affecting the disorganized and disenfranchised would never be well-represented and that interest-group pluralism, with its incremental victories, could never confront big structural problems and imbalances of power. But for many decades, interest-group pluralism was what we had, and it worked reasonably well as a way for liberals with some share of power to allocate resources. And for particular issues, the environment in particular, interest-group pluralism gave that movement a broad base of support—from voters who are conservative on other issues and from politicians as far to the right as the first President Bush—that would not have been possible had environmentalism been defined in broader progressive terms.

But the politics of today's moment, of the situation defined in "The Death of Environmentalism" as "the radical right's control of all three branches of government," brings interest-group pluralism to its knees. Pluralism is a strategy for making improvements while holding governing power; it is not a strategy to save the world from those with unchecked power. And the radical right understands that it can maintain power by exploiting the weaknesses in interest-group pluralism, delivering to the strongest claimants the incremental achievements they and their lobbyists demand (a pro-industry Medicare prescription-drug program, for example) while undermining the very foundation of those demands—an active, responsible, fair government. Washington is filled with organizations and lobbyists who consider themselves "public-interest" activists, who celebrate the 4-percent increase they won in appropriations for their pet program or the three new cosponsors who have signed on to their innovative bill but who remain numb or indifferent to the fact that under current policies, those programs will soon cease to exist entirely.

In many ways, interest-group pluralism resembles the model of neoclassical economics, with its assumption that the choices of individuals and organizations, acting independently, will aggregate into something resembling the general good. And just as environmentalists tend to have a particular recognition of the shortcomings of this laissez-faire economic model—because, among other things, individual actors ignore the long-term and social costs of their actions—it is no surprise that the most powerful recognition of the limits of interest-group pluralism should come from within the environmental movement.

WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE, THEN? The responsibility does not fall solely on the environmental movement to change its ways and take up issues that it did not previously consider "environmental," such as the burden of retiree health-care costs on U.S. automakers. It starts with individuals redefining citizen-

ship, so that instead of marking themselves off as "environmentalists" or "children's advocates" or "union" voters, they see the world the way environmentalists do, as an interconnected system in which global economic trends, corruption, ideology and values, political participation, etc. are all related to the fundamental goal of a just and sustainable society.

To do so requires organizations through which people can redefine their role as citizens. These organizations may thrive on the Internet (MoveOn.org and the vast



Berating Bush: Will progressives think bigger?

readership connected through blogs like the Daily Kos are good examples) or at the local level, where broad-based, multi-issue progressive organizations like Progressive Maryland are reversing the trend toward direct-mail democracy. Needless to say, our history does not lack for a model of a broad-based, coalitional, multi-issue, permanent force for political change—it's called a political party. And while environmentalists, like other issue advocates, often depend on friendly Republican allies for incremental progress, they should not lose sight of their interest in a strong and responsive Democratic Party with deep roots in communities and in states.

Existing organizations should begin to do what environmentalists would call "internalizing the externalities," mean-

ing to make the long-term and social costs part of the equation. In this case, that means acknowledging deeper issues, such as the inability of government to meet changing needs, the threats to constitutional assumptions under which we operate, or the sustainability of a petroleum-based economy, all of which most interest groups would in the past have defined as "not my problem." These groups need to begin to think in a more *political* way, not just about elections but about the overall structural changes necessary for them to make durable gains on behalf of those they represent. Alliances among organizations cannot be based simply on logrolling ("I'll support your issue if you support mine") but on a deeper recognition that "our" issues are interdependent.

The stumbling block, of course, occurs when the issues are interdependent and where alliances are elusive. An ally on issues of poverty, for example, may not take the "progressive" view on reproductive choice, and it is futile to ostracize that ally from the progressive coalition. Recently, for example, broad coalitions of progressive organizations in Wisconsin and in Maine (including Wisconsin Citizen Action and faith-based organizations in that state, and the Dirigo Alliance in Maine) have engaged in efforts (aided by some national organizations including the Grassroots Policy Project and the Proteus Fund) to think through the common elements of their worldview and learn to live with tactical as well as substantive differences.

There may be other differences within a progressive coalition—on trade, fiscal policy, or gun rights—but those disagreements need not be crippling. If we begin to think about the world as environmentalists do, as a complex and nonlinear system in which small interventions can have huge impact for good or for ill, perhaps we can begin to see the method by which progressives of many stripes can begin to act politically, act together, and reverse the current vicious cycle of politics and policy. **TAP**

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Changing the Climate

Why a new approach to global warming would make for a better politics—and planet

BY BILL McKIBBEN

IT'S HARD TO REMEMBER HOW POPULAR THE ENVIRONMENTAL idea was at the end of the 1980s. The movement had survived the crude efforts of the Reagan administration to kill it off. (Remember James Watt? Remember Treasury Secretary Don Regan advising that the best defense against a thinning ozone layer was a baseball cap and a pair of sunglasses?) A barge loaded with American garbage circled the world as one country after another refused to let it land. The beaches of Long Island and New Jersey were awash in medical waste. Time magazine's "Man of the Year" in 1988 was actually a planet: our "Endangered Earth." A serious environmentalist would soon become vice president of the United States.

So what happened? Carbon dioxide happened. If you want to understand the death of environmentalism, you need to understand the gas on which it choked. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) was fatefully different from all the pollution that had come before it. Unlike carbon *monoxide*—the key ingredient in nasty brown smog, the pollutant that helped kill Londoners breathing coal fumes—carbon dioxide, ironically, is essentially nontoxic. But CO₂ is the inevitable byproduct of fossil-fuel combustion. It's not something going wrong; it's what's supposed to happen when you burn coal or oil or gas. But its molecular composition traps heat that would otherwise radiate back out to space, thus causing the phenomenon we now know as global warming—a phenomenon that will produce temperatures by century's end higher than at any time since before the beginning of primate evolution. And to solve it? There's really only one way, which is to reduce the amount of CO₂ we produce. That is, burn less coal and oil and gas.

Which is why it's not like the environmental problems we faced in the past. We can't solve it with a new law or a catalytic converter on our tailpipe. We need to upend the entire way we go about powering our lives, which is to say upend our economies and daily habits. And for American politicians, channeling American voters, that has always seemed far too much to contemplate. The definitive declaration came early on, from the first President Bush, as he prepared reluctantly to attend the huge 1992 environmental summit in Rio de Janeiro, when

the worry about global warming was supposed to start yielding real results. Bush announced, "The American way of life is not up for negotiation."

And he was right. The Clinton administration talked a good game on climate change—after all, Al Gore had written that confronting it should become the "central organizing principle" of human civilization today—but Bill Clinton didn't spend much political capital doing anything about it. The big lobbying pushes were for things like the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the North American Free Trade Agreement, which in some ways were all about extending the "American way of life" to other parts of the world. The Clintonites didn't take on Detroit and the auto unions over the spread of SUVs, and they didn't take on Congress' opposition to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse-gas reductions. And when Clinton was done governing, America was emitting 15 percent more CO₂ than when he'd begun. George W. Bush has been much worse rhetorically, but in practical terms we merely sail on as before.

The environmental movement, predictably, has been unable to do much about it. The movement had a pretty good run: It was strong enough to take on pesticide manufacturers and river-damming engineers with some success. But those matters were peripheral to the American way of life. This matter is central. Scientists estimate that human beings worldwide would need to reduce carbon emissions by 70 percent to 80 percent immediately in order to keep climate disruption from further worsening. Think about that, and perhaps you can understand why a political movement strong enough, barely, to protect blue whales and whooping cranes might be having a bit of trouble—and why any attempt to deal with climate change will mean something that looks very different from environmentalism as we've known it so far. Something that's relevant to the scale of the problem.

PART OF THE SOLUTION, OBVIOUSLY, IS TECHNICAL. IN principle, science could find ways to power our present lives with far less carbon dioxide. In the Clinton era, the Partnership for a New Generation Vehicles program spent billions *not* inventing the hybrid vehicles that Toyota and Honda

managed to build and market. Now President Bush speaks dreamily about a future of hydrogen cars. In late July, he announced a new pact with a few other nations for a non-Kyoto “technological approach” to fighting climate change. Global warming has even emerged as an excuse to continue underwriting the nuclear industry, while the coal industry gets big hand-outs to pursue “carbon capture” technology that would allow us to burn anthracite without emissions.

These efforts are marginally useful. I’ve been driving my hybrid Honda Civic for three years and averaging 55 miles per gallon, but absent tighter gas-mileage standards such hybrids are penetrating the market far too slowly. Similarly, hydrogen might be the fuel of the future (I recently visited the world’s first commercial filling station for the stuff in Reykjavik, Iceland), but the technical challenges lead most observers to predict that maybe 5 percent of autos on American roads will run on hydrogen by 2030. “Clean coal,” meanwhile, may sound like an oxymoron, but since the dirty black stuff supplies most of the world’s electricity, we’d better hope that engineers master the complexities of economically recapturing at least some of the CO₂ a power plant produces. Nuclear power costs a mint. It’s like burning \$20 bills to generate power, and we’d almost certainly be better off using the money for nearly anything else.

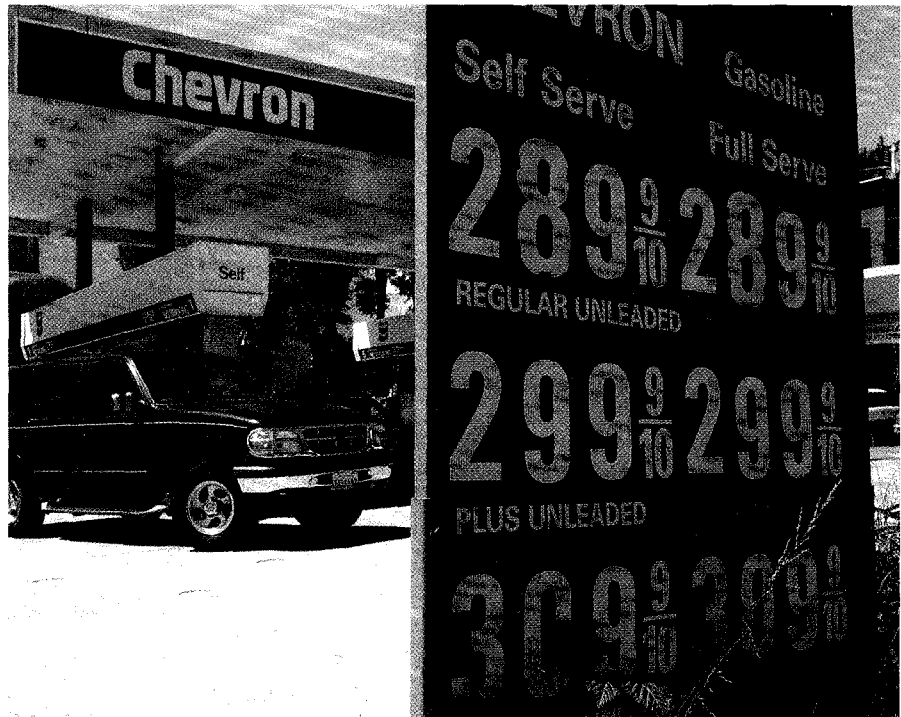
What about solar energy or clean wind power? Well, I’ve got solar panels on my roof. When the sun shines, it’s fantastic; my electric meter runs backward. But the sun doesn’t always shine. Wind and sun are diffuse power, needing to be captured at many, many locations—a thousand ridgelines, a million rooftops. They imply a different relationship to energy than the centralized, always-on, never-runs-out system we’ve come to imagine as natural.

In short, no energy source was ever as easy as fossil fuel. A lump of coal or a pool of oil is energy stored in compact, dense, easy-to-transport form, convenient to stockpile until you need it.

So only part of the change is going to be technological. We’re also going to need to shift expectations. The American way of life is going to have to be up for negotiation. The average new American home has doubled in size since 1970. At that rate, every gain we make in new power supplies will be wiped out by the need to heat and cool ever-larger houses. Because the number of cars and the number of miles they are driven keeps increasing, we used more gas this summer than last even though the price was 30-percent higher. At this rate, all the new hybrids on earth won’t get us close to that 70-percent to 80-percent cut in fuel use. Those trends have to be broken, and reversed.

To date, the reaction in Washington has been paralysis. It’s as if the implications are too big to consider, so people seek refuge in the denial that global warming is real, or in scapegoating. Many Democrats explain their reluctance to support the very modest Kyoto accords on the laughable grounds that they “let China off the hook”—but the average Chinese uses one-sixth the fossil fuel of the average American.

In the other capitals of the developed world, global warming is likewise a question beyond debate, but in the opposite way. Last year, the Tory leader rose in the British Parliament to needle Tony Blair about his slow progress on reducing carbon emissions. Why was Labour not paying more attention to tidal power? Try to imagine Tom DeLay making that case.



Fossil-Fuel Folly: Will soaring prices at the pump accelerate our search for alternatives?

Instead, our Congress almost never engages what you could argue is the biggest issue facing humankind. The first attempt to force any kind of real vote came only in 2003, when John McCain, who was turned on to the issue during the 2000 New Hampshire primaries, joined Joe Lieberman to introduce a Kyoto-lite bill that at least would have set the United States on record as recognizing that a threat exists. The reaction was as expected, with sages like Oklahoma’s James Inhofe rising to describe global warming as a “hoax.” (He later urged Americans to read Michael Crichton’s ludicrous potboiler *State of Fear*, which argued that climate change is a fund-raising scheme cooked up by greedy greens). Sadly, this know-nothingism was hardly met with great force from the other side of the aisle; part of Democratic timidity involves Michigan and West Virginia electoral politics, but a lot more comes from the fear that anyone advocating real action will be accused of wanting to reduce living standards and forcing Americans to drive teeny-tytiny clown cars.

IT'S NOT INTUITIVELY CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THE ISSUE is a complete loser. Polls show that despite the best efforts of the Cato Institute and The Heritage Foundation, most Americans know that the climate is warming, that it's a serious problem, and that we're responsible. However, McCain's bill would need 66 votes to survive an inevitable veto from the president, who said in June that he had no intention of putting America on an "energy diet."

Meanwhile, more and more activists for whom the issue has become a passionate cause are looking beyond Washington and taking the argument to statehouses and city halls. California, with the support of both Gray Davis and Arnold Schwarzenegger, has enacted controls on automobile emissions of CO₂, a backdoor effort to increase auto mileage, which is now under inevitable assault from Bush administration lawyers. New York, with the backing of both George Pataki and Eliot Spitzer, has made far-reaching commitments to renewable energy. Portland, Oregon, has shown that it's entirely possible to dramatically reduce carbon emissions and still thrive. In fact, there's a kind of blue-state/Northeast/Midwest/West Coast crescent emerging—large swaths of America moving toward a European level of anxiety and action.

This kind of diffused movement might eventually pay off quickly if and when some chain of events—four more hurricanes?—finally moves people to alarm. This summer's heat wave literally baked people to death in the 117-degree heat of Arizona. Sooner or later something will hit home. And when it does, campaigners will find more allies than they perhaps expect, including some in the corporate world.

It's true that Exxon Mobil and the coal companies have intimidated Washington on the global-warming issue. But a scattering of multinationals are beginning to contemplate a world where half their divisions (the ones overseas) understand that they have to treat carbon as an expensive evil to be eliminated whenever possible, while the other half (in America) see it as a free good to spew into the atmosphere. A number of corporations have now signed on to the very mild principles promulgated by the Pew Center on Climate Change. And investor-focused groups like the Boston-based Ceres have had some success in convincing corporate boards that exposure to global warming represents a fiduciary risk. In addition, anyone doing business overseas has to deal with the public-relations consequences of America's stand. Long before Iraq, what soured Europeans on George W. Bush was his instant repudiation of Kyoto. Because we account for 4 percent of the world's population and produce 25 percent of the planet's carbon, this was somehow viewed as irresponsible.

That level of activism is nowhere near enough to make a difference. But its European flavor is telling. Americans invented environmentalism, and our scientists dominate the research about global warming, though we're now the caboose on the train. Europe and Japan have been able to begin grappling with climate change because they retain a different conception of public life. They don't need houses as large as ours because their cities are in some sense an extension of

people's living rooms. They can cope with public transportation because they haven't spread as far into distant and disconnected suburbs. In this light, it makes sense that Portland and New York and San Francisco have emerged as the centers of American activism. Those cities still have some public life. But suburban Atlanta? In case you're wondering if such airy speculation makes a concrete difference, consider that western Europeans use, on average, 50-percent less fossil fuel than Americans. Not because their lives are poorer, and not because they have some magical technology; because they think a little differently about life.

The useful thing about global warming is that its causes are so large and deeply rooted that it almost forces us to begin thinking on a similar scale. It's not "environmentalism" that will solve this issue; it has its hands full trying to keep the administration from clear-cutting the national forests and ransacking the Arctic in search of yet more carbon.

No, the political force that finally manages to take this issue on is the political force that also understands and helps to nurture the deep-rooted and unsatisfied American desire for real community, for real connection between people. The force that dares to actually say out loud that "more" is no longer making us happier, that the need for security and for connection is now more important. Such a challenge might conceivably come from unexpected quarters. Christians, including evangelical conservatives, have begun to speak about global warming as a real issue for anyone concerned about the integrity of creation. The anti-suv "What Would Jesus Drive?" movement actually scared Detroit, something the green groups have never managed. Now the National Association of Evangelicals has said that it will lobby Congress about global warming. The hope that it, or anyone else, will go deeper and use climate change as one wedge for a broader, left-right cultural critique of our consumer culture is for the moment just a tantalizing possibility. But given the numbers—that 70-percent to 80-percent reduction—it's the kind of movement we need.

There's no guarantee such a force will ever emerge; you can make a decent argument that our hyper-individualism is terminal, and that the chaos that will start to break out as the world's climate comes unhinged will only make it worse. But you could also make a decent argument that this issue is one of the doors into a new and more interesting politics. A politics that is about living the good life instead of acquiring more things. A politics that is about guaranteeing one another medical care and retirement security and a planet to inhabit. Those tasks all seem beyond the every-man-for-himself ethos of post-Reagan America; they rely on some emergent solidarity. Exactly how it will emerge and who will embody it are not yet clear, but physics and chemistry seem to require it. **TAP**

*Bill McKibben has written widely on the environment, climate change, and overpopulation. His seminal *The End of Nature* was first published in 1989.*

Laboratories of Progress

It's time to look past the blockage in Washington and fight for good energy policy at home.

BY JIM MARZILLI

IN THE ABSENCE OF FEDERAL PROGRESS, STATE AND local governments have emerged as key arenas for policies to address global warming. These policies include strategies to encourage the use of cleaner cars, renewable energy, high-performance buildings, and, most importantly, the proposal to cap carbon-dioxide emissions from utilities in the Northeast. State and local programs won't lower emissions to a sustainable level without federal and international action. But they are a start that can also help transform public opinion and awareness.

Local and regional government leaders joined the climate-change debate in the early 1990s with the creation of the Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) Campaign. CCP members use a five-step process: making an inventory of greenhouse-gas emissions, setting reduction targets, and drawing up an action plan, plus implementation and evaluation. The action areas include energy efficiency in public buildings and lighting, transportation planning, solid-waste disposal, vehicle fleet management, and mitigation of urban heat concentration.

It is seemingly easier to implement climate-change programs in liberal Seattle; Portland, Oregon; Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Ann Arbor, Michigan, but the program thrives in Salt Lake City, too. The 157 participating cities and counties are scattered across 35 states and include both traditional environmental centers and some less obvious locations. The most successful local programs are those with either strong grass-roots constituencies or committed mayors, like Salt Lake City's Rocky Anderson and Richard Daley in Chicago. CCP communities are linked by the ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, an international alliance that provides technical assistance.

Municipal officials need to hear a convincing argument before they will spend money to address a global environmental threat. Local climate-change activists succeed by connecting the

threat of climate change with the high cost of energy, cash-strapped municipal budgets, the health of the economy, and local quality of life.

There are, of course, limits to this approach. Most elected officials plan for the near future measured in budget cycles. They pick the low-hanging fruit where investments in energy efficiency can be recouped quickly, such as substituting light-emitting diodes for incandescent bulbs in traffic lights. They are slower to make the choices that will return their investments over the long haul, like energy-efficient buildings.

State governments, in contrast to local ones, have a larger array of tools at their disposal, with greater control over utilities, building codes, tax incentives, agriculture, and land use. Twenty-eight states have produced climate-change plans, and there are several major regional programs. And unlike the federal response, the states are acting with some bipartisan collaboration.

The states are developing greenhouse-gas reporting mechanisms that build the foundation for future reduction efforts and help businesses identify areas where they can make savings. Twenty-one states and the District of Columbia require that utilities use renewable resources to generate some of their electricity, a renewable portfolio

standard (RPS) that was left out of the recent federal energy bill. But activists in Colorado put their RPS proposal on the ballot in 2004, after it was rejected four times by the Legislature. The grass-roots effort needed to overcome utility-industry spending drove up the turnout in Colorado, helping elect a new Democratic U.S. senator, and representative, as well as Democratic majorities in both legislative chambers.

The federal Clean Air Act preempts state regulation of automobile fuel efficiency but allows states to set limits on greenhouse-gas emissions from vehicles. California has long been a leader on this front. With six northeastern states already on board, Washington and Oregon about to join California's



approach, and Pennsylvania and Illinois considering the proposal (plus tough new standards in Canada), the auto industry will find it increasingly difficult to maintain two product lines for each vehicle it manufactures. Automakers instead got the Bush administration to include in its new fuel-efficiency regulations a federal preemption against any state laws that try to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions from cars.

Public-sector pension funds are a growing part of the climate-change debate. State Treasurers Denise Napier of Connecticut and Phil Angelides of California acknowledge their fiduciary responsibility as trustees of their state pension systems, pushing the companies in which they invest to make sure the threat of climate change does not jeopardize their states' investments. They were among 15 institutional investors asking utilities how greenhouse-gas emissions affect their bottom line and what they are doing to reduce negative impacts. They, and other governmental-fund managers, work with the Investor Network on Climate Risk to develop profitable opportunities in energy efficiency and renewables.

Many governments are reducing emissions and enabling families and businesses to cut their energy consumption.

State policy-makers will have their first significant presence at the Kyoto Protocol negotiations, which resume in Montreal this winter when the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators sends a delegation. They will join municipal leaders who participate in the CCP program and can offer an alternative view on climate change for international partners looking to the United States.

THE MOST AMBITIOUS INITIATIVE OF ALL IS HAPPENING in the Northeast. In 2003, New York Governor George Pataki invited his colleagues in the region to enter a discussion now known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Eleven states (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware, plus Pennsylvania and Maryland as observers) agreed to discuss the creation of a model regulation creating a multistate cap-and-trade program covering carbon-dioxide emissions from the utility sector.

The RGGI states created a mechanism that brings 24 non-governmental organizations representing electric-generator, environmental, consumer, and other affected interests to meet with the environmental regulators in the region. A draft of the model rule was leaked to the media in August, and it sets a target-implementation date of 2009.

Under the proposal, carbon-dioxide emissions will be capped at approximately 150 million tons between 2009 and 2015, with a 10-percent reduction between 2015 and 2020. Utilities will be issued permits that can be bought and sold to allow them to reach their reduction goals at the lowest cost. Because greenhouse-gas reductions produce equal benefits for the states regardless of where in the world they occur, the permits could

be traded both inside and outside the RGGI region. Emission goals could be reached by offsetting some carbon-dioxide emissions in other sectors of the economy.

The RGGI is designed to be flexible and expandable. It will be able to incorporate other sectors of the economy and other greenhouse gases beyond carbon dioxide; new jurisdictions can join the region, and the permits will be tradable in international markets. The eastern Canadian provinces and the West Coast states are observers in anticipation of an international carbon-trading system in which the RGGI will participate. Much of the international community sees the RGGI as the single most important climate initiative happening in the United States.

The most intriguing aspect of the RGGI is the possibility that the carbon permits could be sold to the utilities on the basis of a "polluter pays" policy. Under the draft rule, 20 percent of the permits would be sold at auction. At current European carbon-permit prices, an auction of all of the permits would generate approximately \$1.5 billion. That's more than double the amount currently raised in the RGGI states by the system benefit charges

that fund state energy-efficiency and renewables programs. The carbon auction could generate funds to expand existing programs, provide financial assistance to low-income families struggling with en-

ergy costs, or help move workers out of the fossil-fuel industries.

Any program as ambitious as the RGGI faces big hurdles. The process was designed to be a regulatory matter handled by the governors of the region, bypassing the legislatures. But a carbon-permit auction may require legislative approval in every state in the region. The environmental community hurt its chances of success by acquiescing to a process that excluded state legislators.

Winning approval of a strong carbon auction will also be difficult, as opponents will brand it a tax. Various industry groups will try to block implementation of a strong program on a state-by-state basis. If they fail with the governors, they will appeal to the state legislatures, where their strength is greater than the environmental community's.

The go-it-alone attitude of many environmental group means that as they seek to increase the amount of the carbon permits to be auctioned, they are facing off against industry groups and the state agencies that designed the process, with virtually no support in legislatures across the region.

It is a truism that you should never let a more powerful opponent strike first. But in my state, the Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM), the largest employer association in the commonwealth, sent in June a strongly worded statement to Governor Mitt Romney's administration in opposition to the RGGI. A summary statement was sent to all legislators, AIM members, and opinion leaders. It was the first attempt to frame the issue, and it hit all the right buttons, criticizing the process, the participants, the timing, and the policies of the RGGI. It warns of increased energy costs, economic-competitiveness problems, job losses, increasing costs of health care and management of local government. The environmental community has yet to make any concerted effort to communicate with legislators,

falling behind in an area where it starts with a disadvantage.

The problem is compounded by the political ambitions of Governors Pataki and Romney, who represent two of the three biggest carbon-dioxide emitting states. Both are laying the groundwork for presidential campaigns in 2008. They will come under enormous pressure from Republican constituencies to repudiate the RGGI even while they try to achieve something they can call a victory. As lame-duck governors, both will face opposition from industries organizing in their home states. Romney already capitulated once to his national Republican audience when he added language to the Massachusetts climate-change plan indicating that he has doubts about the scientific certainty of climate change. It's hard to imagine how presidential ambitions won't further color the process.

One of the hidden giants moving against climate-change initiatives in the states is the American Legislative Exchange Council, or ALEC, which calls itself "the nation's largest bipartisan, individual membership association of state legislators" and is backed by conservative corporate funding. Donors sit at the table with legislators and draft model legislation and resolutions on state policy. Now 32 years old, ALEC has assembled a network that includes more than 100 of the nation's state legislative leaders and five governors, in addition to 98 members of Congress.

Not surprisingly, ALEC opposes carbon-dioxide-emission standards, opposes state responses to the Kyoto Protocol, and is in favor of "sound science" in the climate-change debate. You want more information on what ALEC does? Too bad: Its Web site, including all of its model legislation, is password protected and unavailable to nonmembers.

Federal preemption laws remain a potent threat anytime the states move aggressively. The proposal to prohibit state regulation of carbon-dioxide emissions from autos joins other preemptions added in the new federal energy act. These include the placement of liquid natural gas facilities and the construction of electric transmission lines. Previously Congress had preempted state action on auto fuel efficiency, energy standards, and some appliances. ALEC uses its muscle in statehouses across the country to lend a veneer of state support for federal preemption of state authority.

The far smaller National Caucus of Environmental Legislators operates on \$150,000 annually but still manages to do serious educational work with legislators. The latest arrival at the state level is the Progressive Legislative Action Network. Unlike many other progressive policy networks, its tax status will allow it to have an explicit advocacy agenda. It sees itself as the progressive alternative to ALEC.

Many of the organizations that work on energy and climate-change policies at the national level have some presence at the state level, including the Natural Resources Defense Council, Public Interest Research Groups, and the Union of Concerned Scientists. They are badly outfunded by conservative and industry-backed groups, though, and have fairly weak grassroots components. And unlike so many other segments of the progressive community, very few of the environmental organizations have anything resembling an electoral arm. The climate-

change community, like all progressive movements with strong legislative leaders, is also threatened by term limits in 15 states. For example, California Assemblywoman Fran Pavley, whose clean-car law is known simply by her last name, cannot seek reelection to the General Assembly. There is no farm team for the next generation of elected climate-change leaders.

TOO OFTEN AMERICANS THINK THAT "THE ENVIRONMENT" is found in great parks and forests that we visit while on vacation, the places where we hunt and fish, and that endangered species live in exotic places—that the environment is external to our lives. The current debate about the environment encourages people to think that there is a balance we must strike between prosperity and environmental protection, and most Americans opt for prosperity when forced to choose between the two.

The fossil-fuel industry questions why we should change our behavior at the local level to fix a global problem like climate change. After all, how can my town, my state, address an issue that affects the whole planet? American policy-makers and activists answer the question directly and talk all too frequently about climate-change policy as if it were medicine: Take this now, even though it has bad side effects, to save yourself. Environmental activists need to better acknowledge that climate-change policy is about economic development. (The Kyoto Protocol is, after all, a massive development treaty.)

The climate-change debate is a disaster in Washington, but it does not have to be in the states. We can make progress, but it requires changes in the way environmental groups approach the issue. Insider discussions about particular policies might allow for incremental victories, but those talks do not change the American view that the economy and the environment are in competition with each other.

The gains made at the municipal level show how we can change both policies and the debate by drawing the connections between a sound energy policy and a stronger economy. Local activists who support CCP programs have had to sharpen their government-finance skills to sell some of the programs. They have learned to talk a language that appeals to people whose primary interests are local and financial and who are not on a quest to protect the world environment.

Many governments are on the way to reducing their emissions and creating the opportunities for families and businesses to reduce their fuel consumption, their costs, and their greenhouse-gas emissions. We can create a new popular language around energy independence, security, and economic growth, with far less of the corporate influence found in the national debate. State and local governments will be the testing grounds for policies and a message that challenges the nation's disastrous energy and climate-change policy. It is not enough to stop there, but it offers an opportunity to rekindle political interest—and far more promise than the current federal arena. **TAP**

Jim Marzilli is a Massachusetts state representative and the chairman of the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators.

Shooting the Moon

The Apollo Alliance's grand vision for energy independence is a distant legislative goal, but it can help transform politics right now.

BY AMANDA GRISCOM LITTLE

THE MISSION OF THE 2-YEAR-OLD, WASHINGTON, D.C.-based Apollo Alliance has come to represent a bold vision of progressivism. Named for President Kennedy's moon shot, the alliance's goal is to mobilize a sweeping federal commitment to energy independence, with the triple-whammy promise of creating good jobs with new technology, bolstering national security with energy independence, and saving the planet from carbon emissions.

Apollo calls for grand-scale federal and state investment—\$300 billion over 10 years—to underwrite a suite of policy measures designed to stimulate the development of clean-energy industries. The alliance claims the measures would create more than 3 million jobs, eliminate American dependence on Middle East oil imports, lead to 15 percent of U.S. electricity coming from renewable sources, and reduce national energy consumption by 16 percent.

But even though energy independence is almost universally applauded in principle, Apollo faces heavy opposition. Powerful extractive industries fear their own demise in a post-fossil-fuel era. Their close allies in the Bush administration and the Republican-dominated Congress are likewise beholden to the energy status quo and share an aversion to public planning. A budget crisis created by tax cuts makes it seemingly unthinkable to spend the kind of money necessary to make serious headway on renewable energy. But if Apollo is unlikely to achieve progress at a federal level anytime soon, its backers hope it can help transform energy politics at a local and state level.

Apollo's vision has been endorsed by many major unions and many environmental groups, as well as nine Democratic governors, including Jennifer Granholm of Michigan and Bill Richardson of New Mexico. The funding community is similarly enthusiastic. "Apollo has been an absolutely integral force, if not the key force, in helping shift the framework of the energy debate from environmental space into economic ... and national-security space," says Peter Teague, director of the environment program at the Nathan Cummings Foundation, a lead funder of the Apollo project. "At almost every meeting of progressives I go to, people point to Apollo as the prime example of how we

should be doing our politics differently. It fundamentally reorients our message away from doom and gloom and toward inspiration and solving multiple problems simultaneously."

Apollo was publicly unveiled in June 2003, at a time when a host of other organizations were proclaiming similar goals. Many of these like-minded groups were spearheaded by conservative hawks concerned about national security. Frank Gaffney Jr., a former policy adviser to Ronald Reagan and George Bush Senior and founder of the Center for Security Policy; C. Boyden Gray, former White House counsel, and Robert McFarlane, former national-security adviser to Reagan, are active in The Energy Future Coalition and an organization called Set America Free. These groups champion efficiency and alternative-energy agendas in the name of national and economic security, and have intermittently collaborated with Apollo. "All these organizations evolved in parallel on the heels of September 11," said Apollo Alliance founding director Bracken Hendricks, who has been a key adviser to the Energy Future Coalition and is a member of Set America Free.

According to Reid Detchon, executive director of the Energy Future Coalition, "Apollo was the first out of the box in articulating the idea that this is a job-creation and economic-development engine as well as good for energy and the environment. Those of us coming from the security angle have definitely embraced that message." Likewise, *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman has written, "Look at the opportunities our country is missing—and the risks we are assuming—by having a president and vice president who refuse to ... marry geopolitics, energy policy, and environmentalism."

Bill Clinton is also a believer. "We've got to make [energy] a national-security argument, and we've got to make it a jobs argument, and we've got to make the price of oil irrelevant," Clinton said in July at an Aspen Institute gathering.

Even Karl Rove seems to be adopting the rhetoric, in principle if not in substance. In May, President Bush made an appearance at a biodiesel manufacturing facility in Virginia to talk up alternative-fuel subsidies in the energy bill. And in June, during a speech at the 16th annual Energy Efficiency Forum in Washington, he proclaimed, "Here in America, we have

become too dependent—too dependent—on the increasingly limited supply of foreign oil for our own energy needs.”

But in practice, of course, President Bush has mainly pushed for more drilling and more tax breaks for extractive industries—even as fossil-fuel developers are enjoying record-high oil and gas prices. Indeed, the same goes for many others who pay lip service to energy independence. In other words, the presumed bipartisan consensus on the goal of energy independence falls apart as soon as specific policies get debated.

Senator Maria Cantwell, who sits on Apollo's advisory board, proposed an amendment to the energy bill last June, calling for a 40-percent reduction in U.S. oil imports over 20 years. The measure was summarily defeated. Similarly, Representative Jay Inslee failed to even get a vote on his plan to replace the energy bill with a New Apollo Energy Project. That measure, which has since been introduced as stand-alone legislation, includes ambitious measures from a mandatory carbon cap to \$49 billion in loan guarantees for the construction of clean-energy facilities. (The Apollo Alliance was not involved in developing the Cantwell initiative, despite her allegiance to the group, and though the alliance worked with Inslee as he crafted his bill, it did not endorse the final product because it included fuel-economy proposals that were objectionable to one of Apollo's member unions.)

Not surprisingly, the energy bill that Bush eagerly signed in early August was quite limited in its assistance for clean-energy technologies. Of the \$14.5 billion in subsidies it earmarks for the energy industry over the next decade, only 20 percent will go to renewables and energy efficiency. Far more prominent in the bill, and in the Bush energy strategy as a whole, are big subsidies for the nuclear-power industry and a big push to drill for oil and gas on public lands and in offshore waters. Critics of all political stripes argue that the bill's grand giveaways to oil and coal producers will, if anything, increase America's dependence on fossil fuels, not lessen it. In essence, what we've now got at the federal level is lots of talk about promoting a clean-energy economy—and lots of action that's leading to anything but.

A POLLO'S LEADERS HAVE HAD THEIR OWN DIFFERENCES over how to parlay their widely admired vision into concrete policy making. Hendricks resigned from the executive-director position this spring, though he remains on the steering committee. “Apollo has not only recontextualized the climate-change and energy-independence debate [but] created an opening to pursue solutions,” he says. “The question is:

How do you capitalize on that opening? It may be through Apollo, or a different set of strategies.”

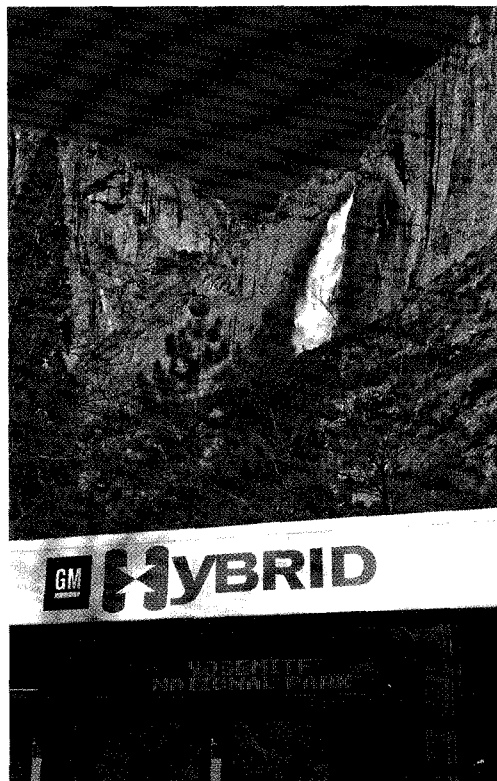
Hendricks now divides his time between his new fellowship at the Center for American Progress, founded by Democratic strategist John Podesta, and his role as a strategic consultant at the Breakthrough Institute, the think tank founded by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, authors of the controversial “Death of Environmentalism” paper that assailed the green movement's political irrelevance.

Leaders of the Apollo program, who spent great effort trying to build practical coalitions among environmental and labor groups, were embarrassed when the “Death” authors singled out Apollo for lavish praise while savaging the rest of the environmental movement. “Our phone started ringing from friends wondering why we were working with people who attacked our coalition partners,” says a leader of the original Apollo plan. “We didn't know the paper was coming. We were completely blindsided.”

Within six months of the release of the paper, Shellenberger and “Death of” ally Adam Werbach, both of whom were among Apollo's founding members, distanced themselves from the alliance. “Given our differing visions for how to advance Apollo, and lingering upset over ‘Death of,’ we all agreed it would be better for Adam and me to leave the Apollo Alliance and seek other ways to advance the vision, values, and ideas at both the national and state levels,” Shellenberger said. “I felt like we needed to articulate concrete political proposals and get them out there in the world.” He argues that the alliance's focus on moving small state and local initiatives yields only “incremental” policy change, and it has not designed or en-

dorsed new federal-level legislative initiatives. “We're more interested in finding ways to introduce big, bold, and inspiring legislative proposals that may not pass anytime soon, but serve to frame the debate and create political momentum,” he said.

Apollo leaders might argue that their call for \$300 billion to advance clean-energy innovation is just such a bold vision—one that has little chance of becoming a legislative reality anytime soon, but nevertheless challenges the energy status quo and acts as an organizing and educational tool. In reality, though, Apollo has outlined only vague legislative strategies to substantiate this \$300 billion goal. In 2003 it issued a 40-page white paper that explored broad categories of investment for these funds, but since then has not grounded this vision in legislative detail, or developed other, more detailed federal-level objectives.



Next Stop: Energy independence?

Jeff Rickert, the acting executive director of Apollo, acknowledges that because his top priority is holding together a coalition of diverse organizations, there are limits to how specific and controversial Apollo can get in terms of its legislative proposals. Recall that the alliance could not throw its weight behind Representative Inslee's New Apollo Energy Project—the only federal-level initiative yet proposed that embodies the alliance's mission—because one of its members objected to a fuel-economy provision. “We have to steer clear of anything that looks like [corporate average fuel economy standards],” Rickert admits, in order to keep allies in the labor movement on board. Gasoline taxes and caps on carbon-dioxide pollution are also anathema to some of Apollo's labor partners.

Leo Gerard, president of the United Steelworkers of America, is on the Apollo advisory board and was instrumental in rallying support for the alliance among labor unions. He says, “My interest is in advancing the principles, advancing the fight, not dissolving into arguments about divisive regulatory strategies.”

Apollo has endorsed some policy prescriptions that have already attracted broad bipartisan support in the Senate, including a federal renewable-portfolio standard that would require 15 percent of America's electricity to come from clean-energy sources by 2015, a renewable-fuel standard that would require 10 percent of fuels to be derived from biomass by 2010, and strong efficiency codes for building development. But even these are opposed by the Bush administration, and are at best partial steps toward a new clean-energy revolution.

While Apollo focuses on maintaining consensus, the Breakthrough Institute aims to compete on the terrain of concrete and controversial legislative proposals. To wit, it has been collaborating with the office of Senator Barack Obama on a bill it hopes he will propose later this year known as the Automotive Competitiveness and Accountability Act. It would relieve the pressure on U.S. automakers to bankroll the rising costs of legacy health insurance—an expense that doesn't burden their foreign competitors—and, in exchange, obligate them to invest heavily in energy-efficiency technologies and comply with substantially more aggressive fuel-economy standards. It represents a new way of thinking about environmental policies, says Hendricks, “offering a bailout to the [auto industry] from these hugely debilitating health costs they're grappling with but linking it to an accountability for achieving public purposes.”

Shellenberger says visionary proposals are precisely what progressives need right now, “devices that will prompt battles that may be lost legislatively but won at a cultural and political level” because they would force conservatives to take a position at odds with the pursuit of energy independence. The greater goal, in other words, is not so much to create frictionless coalitions but constructive controversy. “We want to catapult the fuel-economy issue into contested political space,” as Nordhaus puts it, which would compel opponents of fuel efficiency to justify their positions.

The hope is that Obama and other progressive leaders could characterize anyone who votes against the Automotive Competitiveness and Accountability Act as an opponent of national

security, job creation, and public health—just the way conservatives used the issue of gay marriage in the 2004 election to characterize liberals as opponents of traditional family values.

In theory, it's a promising tactic, but the Breakthrough Institute gadflies might be forced to change their operating strategy once they get their hands dirty in the political arena—one that requires patience and subtle diplomacy. To succeed, they may need to restrain the criticism and vitriol they have unleashed not just on conservatives but on their own allies as well.

Moreover, the useful strategy of smoking out and embarrassing opponents doesn't negate the importance of building and protecting the common ground between once-competitive interests, according to Hendricks. “The challenge of jumping into the fight and pushing wedge issues is going to move the debate further and faster,” he says. “But holding together the blue-green coalition has real value. Keeping allies together and focused on what they can agree on is critical. We have to define and protect a safe, positive space for accord between people that have only recently begun to see their common cause.”

IF SUCCESS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL SEEMS OUT OF REACH, though, the Apollo Alliance has made impressive strides in the states, in many cases simply by bringing environmentalists and labor together. In Pennsylvania, Apollo was instrumental in orchestrating discussions between Governor Ed Rendell and a coalition of organizations, including steelworkers, that wanted him to bring the wind industry into the state. Rendell devised an Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act with subsidies to lure wind-energy producers. As a result, the Spanish company Gamesa invested in a new turbine installation in Pennsylvania that will create up to 1,000 new jobs over five years.

In California, Apollo has worked to get two huge pension funds, CalPERS and CalSTRS, to adopt a so-called Green Wave initiative, an environmental investment plan under which those funds would support more than \$450 million in eco-friendly technologies (e.g., clean- and renewable-energy sources). And in New York City, the organization has been working with the city council to develop high-performance “green building” measures.

Rickert says that Apollo plans over the next three years to maintain only a low-level involvement in federal initiatives while expanding its local and regional efforts, with an emphasis on 10 states, including California, Minnesota, New Mexico, Ohio, Washington, and Wisconsin. “We believe the best way to pave the way for sound energy initiatives is demonstrating their success at a state level,” he said.

Apollo has certainly demonstrated its ability to attract and maintain broad backing for a compelling vision, as well as to promote incremental policy measures at the state and local level. Though some of its original leaders and admirers have moved on, they share a common desire with Apollo's current leaders to break the political stalemate—whether through consensus from the bottom up or controversy from the top down. **TAP**

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The End of the Population Movement

The challenge isn't population control. It's sustainable development, built upon the emancipation of women and economic opportunity.

BY ADAM WERBACH

ON A TYPICALLY BRIGHT AND SUNNY DAY ON THE corner of 24th and Mission in San Francisco, the trade in forged birth certificates and Social Security cards flows with the same efficiency as the burrito shops that surround the BART rail station. On this day I watched three people order or pick up their papers in the period of an hour, none of them appearing concerned that he or she was breaking the law.

This reality is an open secret in America, deemed unacceptable by those on both sides of the aisle, from Ted Kennedy to Rush Limbaugh. In recent years American exclusionists have tried to turn the need to reform immigration procedures into a crusade against foreigners.

In the last decade, one of the ugliest battles over immigration has occurred here in San Francisco, as immigration-control activists have tried to seize the agenda of the nation's oldest and largest grass-roots environmental group, the Sierra Club.

At first blush, immigration and environmentalism have little connection, and that has been the argument made by most of the club's volunteer and staff leaders. They have tried to deflect the exclusionists with a position of "neutrality," stating that the Sierra Club shall take no position on the question of immigration. During the first modern battle over this topic, I served as president of the Sierra Club and spearheaded the successful campaign to defeat the insurgent takeover efforts. But I was unable at the time to convince the club that neutrality as a position is politically impractical and bad for the environment. In fact, it is possible to be pro-immigration in ways that are good for immigrants, good for America, and good for sustainable development.

The argument I'll propose in this article is that the population discourse undercuts progressive goals and instead helps right-wing exclusionists and those with little compassion for humans. To be effective, well-meaning population activists need to be open to leaving behind their existing framework and allow their work to be described as a women's empowerment and sustainable-development movement.

"Population control" frames the problem as too many people, and even worse, as too many poor people. Within this

framework, one set of issues counts (including immigration, contraception, and abortion), while another set of key issues (the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA, economic development, the rights of women, and poverty) remains outside. In the population-control frame, the number of people and their placement on the planet is the root problem that needs to be solved. But is that really the problem? Family planning has succeeded only where economic security has been improved for women, including access to food and shelter, health care, and education. With this as background, the real population problem may be the treatment of women on the planet.

A related challenge is to reject the Malthusian premise that more people will necessarily deplete resources and lead to human and ecological ruin. As technology and human understanding evolve, it is possible to sustain a large population with decent living standards, and without plundering the planet—but not if billions of poor people are left to scratch out a living in dwindling rain forests and expanding deserts doubly threatened by the desperation of the poor and the rapacity of the rich.

Here's the paradox: If we reject the population-control frame in favor of the goals of women's emancipation and sustainable development, we may achieve a healthier and more stable population, without inviting the unwelcome embrace of ugly exclusionists. It's an ideal time to make the change: The global population growth rate peaked more than a decade ago and is now declining. The annual growth rate in 1963 was 2.2 percent; today it's closer to 1.2 percent. Today's population of 6 billion people will become 9 billion people in the next 50 years, and then it will begin to decline.

My hope is that those people who describe themselves as population activists for historical reasons, who already find themselves working for women's emancipation and sustainable development, will seize this moment to challenge the population orthodoxies and allow their work to move forward without the baggage of the population framework. Today they're fighting a losing battle against history, language, and commonly understood mythologies that attract the wrong types of allies. An emerging new movement could seek to unleash human potential, build human dignity, and allow women across the globe

the choice to have a small family, go to school, and pursue employment outside of the house. To this end, a pro-immigrant, pro-America immigration policy can demonstrate that, with planning and thought, we can help people achieve their dreams while allowing us to continue ours. The Sierra Club, and the population movement as a whole, will never stop the debate over immigration policy until we leave the population framework behind and allow a new movement to grow.

BIRTH

In the 1960s, Paul Ehrlich was a young assistant professor at Stanford, fascinated by the emerging resource challenge of population growth. After he delivered a high-profile speech at San Francisco's Commonwealth Club, David Brower, the legendary executive director of the Sierra Club, approached him about turning the speech into a book. Three weeks later, Ehrlich and his wife, Anne, produced *The Population Bomb*, which would become the founding text of a new global effort to control the size of the world's population.

Ehrlich's wife co-wrote the book, but the publisher thought

Today, population activists are fighting a losing battle against history, language, and commonly understood mythologies that attract the wrong types of allies.

that it would sell better if Paul's was the only name on the cover and Anne's was left off. Despite the fact that Paul and Anne are quite forward-thinking when it comes to their vision of population control, the publisher's simple act of leaving Anne's name off the book is a fitting metaphor for how women have been viewed by the population movement. A short while later, Paul Ehrlich was invited to appear on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, and the Ehrlichs' 95-page book was imprinted on the American psyche as the framework for understanding the significance of the size of the world's population.

At that time a new collection of activists—combining suburbanites wanting to protect the wide open spaces of the West and internationalists worried about global poverty—formed an uneasy alliance behind the concept of reducing the size of the global population as a means of protecting the planet.

In 1980, University of Maryland professor Julian Simon famously challenged Ehrlich. Simon invited Ehrlich to pick five metals worth \$1,000 in 1980 dollars, and offered a wager. If the 1990 price of the metals was more than \$1,000, Ehrlich would win; if the value of the metals after inflation was less than \$1,000, Simon would win. The bet was centered around demand and scarcity. Would more people and more consumption make metals more rare, and therefore more expensive? Or would scarcity induce invention and substitution, and lower prices?

Ehrlich chose copper, nickel, tin, chrome, and tungsten. By 1990, the 20th anniversary of the first Earth Day, all five metals were below their inflation-adjusted price level in 1980.

Ehrlich lost the bet and sent Simon a check.

In the early 19th century, Thomas Malthus had similarly projected that the core impact of population growth was to be found in food scarcity. Malthus' hypothesis was that unchecked population growth would always exceed the available means of subsistence and a series of "positive checks," like disease and starvation, and "preventative checks," like the postponement of marriage, would keep balance in society.

Ehrlich wrote, "The battle to feed humanity is over. In the 1970s, the world will undergo famines. Hundreds of millions of people are going to starve to death in spite of any crash programs embarked upon now." United Nations figures show that over the past 30 years among developing countries as a group, the percentage of undernourished people in the population has decreased from 37 percent to 18 percent. While there have been an unconscionable number of deaths in the 20th century from famine, there has been nothing like the cataclysm predicted by Ehrlich.

In the last decade there have been a number of efforts that have moved beyond the population framework. They are not described as "population" efforts. In fact, most of the work done by population activists today would not be associated with "population control" by the public if population activists didn't self-describe the work in that fashion.

Take the case of 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Wangari Maathai. She's launched a new effort, Women for Change. Among its goals:

- Assist young girls and women [who are facing] the challenges of growing up, making complex decisions about their sexual and reproductive health, and [helping them to gain] knowledge and skills to protect themselves from HIV and AIDS.
- Facilitate ... income-generating activities such as tree planting, beekeeping, and food processing to engender economic empowerment.
- Promote healthy eating habits through indigenous and nutritious foods.

Since 1977, Maathai's Greenbelt Movement in Kenya has focused on empowering women through natural-resource protection as a means of economic development. Giving women more choices will inevitably give them the freedom to choose to have a smaller family without fear of losing children in childbirth or to disease.

By contrast, "population" projects bring up many cultural references, nearly all of them bad. From Nazi-era eugenics to forced sterilizations, the population framework is indelibly linked to colonial paternalism. Family-planning clinics are the most benign of these, but it's widely accepted that they need to fit into a larger network of rural health-care efforts and sustainable development. If the goal is purely population control, allowing HIV to rage unchecked in Africa would be a solution worthy of Jonathan Swift.

This brings us back to immigration. Many, if not most, population activists have attempted to steer clear of the issue for

moral and political reasons. But this lingering debate is a compelling argument for moving beyond the population movement.

IMMIGRATION

About 11 million people in America are unauthorized migrants. About 57 percent of these migrants are Mexican, and another 24 percent are from other Latin American countries. It's fair to say that when people are talking about illegal immigration into the United States they are speaking of Latino immigrants. In 1990 only 12 percent of unauthorized immigrants lived outside the big six settlement states of California, New York, Texas, Illinois, Florida, and New Jersey; today 39 percent live outside these states. Their arrival has made it impossible to turn on right-wing talk radio and not hear someone ranting about immigrants.

To understand immigration, we need to understand why immigrants choose to leave their families and hometowns and decide to move to the United States. The majority of immigrants moving to the United States from Latin America do so for economic reasons. Why?

- Ineffective, corrupt governments like Mexico's profiteering PRI, which ruled Mexico from 1934 to 2000.
- Economic dislocation caused by global trade—for example, the post-NAFTA collapse of the Mexican corn market brought on by the flood of cheap U.S. corn caused thousands of peasant farmers from the southern state of Chiapas to seek work in the United States.
- The great Mexican baby boom.

In 1970 the fertility rate for Mexican women was about seven children per mother; today, with modest progress toward women's emancipation and middle-class aspirations, it's just a little more than two children. Because fertility is down, Mexico's rate of population growth has slowed. By 2010 the number of immigrants will begin to decrease.

Immigrants may not have legal documents, but many, if not most, obtain document forgeries that entitle them to pay taxes that they'll never benefit from. A recent *New York Times* article estimated that unauthorized immigrants pay about \$7 billion a year into the Social Security system. Immigrants also pay the most regressive of taxes, the sales tax, which helps pay for policing, roads, and fire stations.

Many in the right-wing anti-immigration movement want to keep Mexicans out on crudely nativist grounds. Environmentalists committed to population control end up with more refined arguments but the same bottom line: fewer immigrants. They contend that a Mexican, once assimilated into the United States, begins to consume like an American, and the planet can hardly afford more Americans. But consider the practical alternatives.

In southern Mexico, on the Guatemala border, is the Lacandon rainforest, an impenetrable mass of hardwoods and canopy and home to rare birds like the quetzal. I've visited this forest a number of times over the last 15 years and I've seen its decline as peasants from Mexico and Guatemala have tried to clear land to scratch out a living. As someone who loves rainforests, it's difficult to witness the Lacandon's destruction, but

it's impossible to deny people who are barely surviving the opportunity to eat. These displaced peasants are casualties of global forces. From an ecological perspective, it would be better to have these displaced migrants on farmland that can support them and allow the rainforest to remain intact.

In this equation lies an answer to our immigration challenge. Mexico has people to spare, at least for the next 20 years, and America has land that needs people: the Great Plains.

LAND

Since 1920, the Great Plains—covering 10 states with an almost mystical flatness—have lost about a third of their population. One-third of all counties in the Great Plains—900,000 square miles—have fewer than six people per square mile. My wife's grandfather worked a farm in Bazine, Kansas, all his life. By the time he was ready to retire, no one in his family wanted the farm. When he finally found a buyer, he sold the house and the land for \$4,000. The Great Plains are once again America's frontier.

The idea of filling up the Midwest with aspirational settlers is not a new one. It was Abraham Lincoln who signed the Homestead Act to provide western land to settlers, kicking aside Native Americans, a mistake that does not need to be repeated. Immigrants are already moving to the Midwest; in the last decade, 85 percent of the labor-force growth in the state of Illinois came from immigration.

It's time now for a new movement to rekindle the aspirational American dream, first for those Americans displaced by Hurricane Katrina and those who can't afford an apartment in San Francisco or New York, but also for the teeming masses of people who can help make America hunger for excellence again. In the process, we can also set aside a massive new Buffalo Commons to give nature back the land it requires.

Targeted migration is one way of guiding immigration so that it works for Americans and for immigrants. Yet the broader need is to make it possible for people to earn a living in their own countries.

Today the free flow of people and goods across borders in Europe provides a model for North American integration. The flood of immigrants across the border won't be stopped by force; it will stop once North American economies hit an equilibrium that allows some Mexicans to find work at home and others to find opportunities on empty U.S. farmland and in small, emptied towns. As Mexico becomes a more productive, higher-wage society, there will be less pull to the United States.

These ideas—targeted migration, economic integration, and women's emancipation—all fit together into a new strategy that rejects "population control" in favor of an unleashing of human potential. If we're successful at moving beyond the population movement and toward an integrated economic development and women's rights movement, we'll stand a much better chance of creating a world where we all can live. **TAP**

Adam Werbach formerly served as the national president of the Sierra Club and is currently launching a new progressive film club (www.progressivefilmclub.com).

A New Environmentalism

Could a new green ethic provide common cause in our deeply divided nation?

BY CARL POPE

MCLEAN COUNTY, KENTUCKY, IS SO RED THAT political operatives might call it crimson. You can't get much further from the image of a latte-drinking liberal than Bernadine Edwards, a local school-bus driver. She speaks with a soft Kentucky lilt as she looks out over the green valley that has been in her family for more than 60 years. "Something here just ain't right," she says.

What's wrong is the pollution that has slowly ruined her family's life, forcing her to wear a respiratory mask when she gardens outside and making her give up her seat on the porch swing next to her house. In just a few short years, Tyson Foods has built 98 factories within a three-mile radius of Bernadine's home, pumping so much toxic ammonia into the air that Bernadine has sealed her windows and shut her family inside. And when the Bush administration began meeting behind closed doors with the poultry industry to craft a deal that would let it off the hook for cleaning up the pollution it causes, Bernadine and other rural residents joined up to voice their outrage. Leaving Kentucky, she traveled to the East Coast for the first time so she could lobby administration officials in Washington about the need to put public-health considerations ahead of polluter profits.

Bernadine's concern about pollution and its consequences for the health of her family has trumped party politics and could provide a common cause in our deeply divided country. It looks like the bridge between red America and blue America just might be green.

THE TRUTH IS, THIS COUNTRY IS NOT AS SPLIT AS MANY would have us believe. Our values unite us more than they divide us. We all care about our families, our kids, and our communities, no matter where we are on the political spectrum. We like knowing that there are solutions to our problems and that progress is possible. We believe that two heads are better than one, especially when the two heads see things a little differently. We value free speech and public participation and the well-being of all Americans, not just people who live in certain states. And, like Bernadine Edwards, people on all sides of the spectrum will speak out when they see injustice—

especially when that injustice is something felt as viscerally as the air our children breathe and the water we drink.

Beltway strategists might not want us to see it, but if you look around this country you will see more and more examples of how unusual allies are putting aside their political differences and coming together. Americans who can't agree on gun control or abortion are finding common cause in the need to protect our air, water, and land.

Take, for example, the ecumenical Christian network that recently sent a letter to President Bush with the line, "Protection of the global climate is an essential requirement for faithful human stewardship of God's creation on Earth." The National Council of Churches, which represents more than 100,000 congregations nationwide, has begun to describe stewardship of the earth as a critical "moral value." And the growing Interfaith Power & Light program has helped more than 300 congregations in California alone conserve energy and has prevented 40 million pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere nationwide.

It's not just religious groups, either. Hunters and anglers are the most vocal proponents of wetlands protection, and they represent a formidable obstacle to anyone proposing to weaken protections. In South Dakota, Indian Creek is a beautiful open area of steep canyons and gullies, and a popular destination for big-game hunting of deer and antelope. The Sierra Club is working with Safari Club International and Backcountry Hunters and Anglers to designate the area as the first-ever grassland wilderness area. And no one is more excited about this than Indian Creek's odd couple, Jeff Olson and Carl Stonecipher—two local hunters on the board of the Blackhills Sportsmen's Club—one a passionate Democrat, the other a staunch Republican. Despite their political differences, both are firmly committed to the idea of protecting wilderness for future generations.

Historic foes are joining forces in communities across our country, even in the Wild West. Western ranchers and my organization have set aside our differences to fight a common threat: the surge in gas and oil drilling on federal and Indian land. In New Mexico's San Juan Basin, the number of wells in the region has jumped 15 percent in five years. Cattleman Chris

Velasquez, whose family has ranched in the area for more than a century, says sloppy drilling practices—such as leaving pools of toxic antifreeze—endanger the cattle. And conservationists say installing roads and drilling pads damages the piñon- and juniper-covered hills. Elsewhere in the region, ranchers and environmentalists are partnering to protect the land—opposing drilling in Wyoming's Powder River Basin and Montana's Rocky Mountain Front, for example.

These strong alliances are developing in cities as well as rural communities. Labor unions have taken up the environment as a cause; they know better than anyone that developing clean-energy technologies will create quality jobs. And Latino and African American families continue to be the ones on the front lines battling air and other pollution that disproportionately affects their communities.

Residents of a predominantly African American neighborhood in the nation's capital have taken action to reconnect their community to the Anacostia River. Considered one of America's most endangered waterways, the Anacostia is Washington, D.C.'s "forgotten river." Older community members remember swimming and fishing in it, but heavy-metal contamination and sewage overflow have left local fish deformed and dangerous to eat. The Anacostia, however, remains a focal point for the neighborhoods nearby. African American citizen groups in the heart of the inner city are coming together to fight for improved water quality and increased access to the riverfront.

The environmental movement is full of other new faces—and they differ from the image that you may have in your head of a "typical conservationist." Consider the recent work the Sierra Club has done to protect mothers and children from mercury poisoning. Mercury is a dangerous toxin that causes developmental problems and learning disabilities. A byproduct of coal-fired power plants, it rains down into our rivers and makes its way into our bodies via contaminated fish. One in six American women already has enough mercury in her body to put a baby at risk. Across the country, my organization has been hosting community testing events, often at beauty salons, where mothers can get a strand of hair tested and find out how much mercury is in their bodies and what they can do about it. The response has been overwhelming—and not just in big, "liberal" cities. In Salt Lake City, the line of 150 moms snaked so far out the door that the salon couldn't accommodate everyone. In Bismarck, North Dakota, dozens of women showed up at a local park to get tested. And in Virginia, women brought their kids with them to the salon and asked how they could make a difference. "This is not just about tuna," a mother named Julia Smith said. "We have to make the government accountable for cleaning up the power plants."

The bottom line is that these days, the most compelling voices for environmental stewardship are as likely to be those of a mother, a minister, a nurse, or a union shop worker. And what binds them together are American values stronger than hatred

or anger or fear. We don't have to buy into the idea that this is an all-or-nothing game, half of our country wins, half loses. We need to tell fewer stories about victims and more about heroes, about the men and women who are affecting real, lasting change.

CLEARLY, WE FACE CHALLENGES. THERE ARE UNDENIABLE obstacles in the way of this vision being carried out—namely, a defiantly pro-business, anti-regulatory administration in Washington. But across the spectrum, a growing chorus is calling for a halt to policies and practices that put polluters before the public.

In recent days, our nation has been shocked and saddened by images of families struggling to survive in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. This disaster will test the limits of our national resources, and national unity and grass-roots partnerships like the ones described here will be more imperative than ever in our history. In addition to being a human and economic tragedy, Katrina is an environmental disaster of un-

We have learned over and over again that everyone has a stake when it comes to protecting our air, water, and natural places. The values we are talking about—like fairness, responsibility, health, and safety—are universal.

precedented proportions. Although the extent of the environmental devastation remains unknown, it is clear the storm is a wake-up call and a warning not to repeat the mistakes of the past. America, Louisiana, and the Gulf Coast have an opportunity to be visionary and think well into the future in our recovery efforts. In rebuilding New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, we can work with unions to help make America more energy independent—by using "green building" practices that rely on conservation and renewable sources of energy, for example. We can work with churches and associations to ensure that every citizen, rich or poor, can live in safe, healthy neighborhoods. And we can rethink how toxic chemicals are stored and shipped through our communities.

We have learned over and over again that everyone has a stake when it comes to protecting our air, water, and natural places. The values we are talking about—like fairness, responsibility, health, and safety—are universal. And many of the solutions to our environmental challenges are well within reach, if we work together. Thirty-five years after the first Earth Day, the movement for cleaner and safer communities is more alive than ever. The vibrant partnerships that are flourishing in grass-roots campaigns across the country are proof that we all have a stake in a healthier future and a legacy for our children.

"When we try to pick out anything by itself," John Muir famously said, "we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." That's truer today than ever. **TAP**

Carl Pope is executive director of the Sierra Club.

A Breath of Fresh Air

How environmentalists, health experts, and poverty advocates are forging new coalitions to tackle an urban asthma epidemic

BY GEOFFREY LOMAX, ERIC ROBERTS, AND PAUL ENGLISH

THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT IN urban health came in the late-19th and early-20th centuries, when a series of broad changes transformed the social and material environment for millions of inner-city Americans. Important policies aimed at improving children's health, working conditions, housing, and public sanitation translated into dramatic improvements in the health of the average American. And they happened, largely, because Americans in the Progressive Era had come to recognize that "health" is inextricably linked to the much broader social, economic, and environmental conditions in which people live.

In more recent decades, however, this enlightened ideal regrettably gave way to a narrower, segmented thinking about health care in which the health of people was considered separately from the conditions of their environment, housing, and workplace. Epidemiologists—scientists who study causes of disease and how illness is distributed in populations—increasingly focused on individual "risk factors," such as smoking and diet, while neglecting the social influences that affect both health and behavior. As medicine became consolidated as its own sovereign profession, doctors also concentrated on changing individual risk behaviors, often leaving political and industry influences on health blameless. This shift still characterizes the way most experts think about the epidemic of urban asthma, and it is evident in the political response to the disease.

Odd as it may seem, the asthma scourge creates an opportunity for a promising sort of coalition politics, one in which traditional environmentalists concerned about dirty cities join advocates in the low-income housing community, health-care officials, and others to promote new thinking and real results. Just

such an approach is under way today in California, where our State Department of Health Services has partnered with neighborhood advocacy organizations, local health agencies, and environmental groups to develop a system that provides a unique view of patterns of urban asthma. The results are helping policymakers and community advocates target the intersection of social deprivation, environmental injustice, and adverse health to find solutions to our asthma epidemic.

Poor and minority children suffer a disproportionate burden of asthma, at least in part because of the environmental conditions where they live. In homes, schools, and workplaces, mold, dust mites, and even cockroaches trigger acute attacks and may promote the development of the disease itself. Also implicated are broader environmental hazards—from elevated ozone to diesel fumes and other airborne pollutants—which are also more concentrated in poor communities. In addition, poor people and children of color are less likely to get preventive care for asthma because they lack decent health insurance. This means they are more susceptible to ongoing symptoms as well as more serious attacks that lead to emergency-room treatment and hospital stays.

The preventive regimen for asthmatics is now well established. Nearly all children prone to asthma can remain largely attack-free through monitoring and relatively simple medications. But children of the poor, in addition to living in hazardous environments, are less likely to have access to this preventive approach.

Typically, "solutions" to the epidemic have been piecemeal. Environmental groups focus on air-pollution issues while housing experts lobby for cleaner, safer homes. Health-care and labor-rights advocates seek improved access to care, es-

pecially for children, without a coordinated effort to address the root causes. These piecemeal efforts—cleaning up outdoor air without corresponding improvements in homes, schools, and workplaces, for example—can result in high costs without measurable health benefits. And they obscure broader thinking about the relationship among issues affecting class, race, income, and public health.

With an eye toward better solutions to urban-health crises like asthma, the national Institute of Medicine and the Pew Foundation's Environmental Health Commission have pushed for better coordination of research on how environmental conditions affect human health. In 2002, Congress responded, funding a new, national Environmental Public Health Tracking Program. In California, this initiative is helping our team of researchers evaluate patterns of asthma in Alameda County, which is part of the San Francisco Bay area. Along with asthma, rates of unemployment, poverty, overcrowding, and homeownership are merged with locations of schools, roadways, and toxic sites, and are displayed in a geographic information system being developed for the Internet. Maps that can be printed from this system provide strong evidence to push for changes in land-use decisions, housing developments, and even diesel-truck routes, which can result in a multipronged assault on causes of asthma.

FOR ALL THE ATTENTION GIVEN TO the problem of asthma over time, it is maddeningly difficult to answer a simple question: How much asthma exists? Diagnosing it can be highly subjective, and clinicians often disagree even about a single patient's condition. There is no single test that can be used to establish the diagnosis, and no "asthma registries" indicating how many people in a community have the disease. To further complicate matters, a large percentage of the affected population suffers from asthma symptoms but never encounter the health-care system. In the absence of complete information, public-health agencies have tried to make the best of limited data—relying on reported hospi-

talizations or emergency-room visits for asthma attacks, for instance. But these indicators represent only the tip of the iceberg for asthma treatment; doctors' office visits and obtaining medication are far more common and preferable events, but much harder to track.

While imprecise, these indicators are suggestive of overall trends. For example, emergency-room visits due to asthma have increased in recent years. Yet we know that hospitalization and emergency-room figures tend to paint a distorted picture of the overall problem, one skewed heavily toward poor patients who are more likely to depend on the emergency room for their basic health-care needs. Consider the conclusions of a recent study in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*, which found that African American asthmatics in Chicago are six times more likely than whites to go to the emergency room and 12 times more likely to be hospitalized. If one were to map these results, the asthma problem would appear to be six to 12 times worse in inner-city neighborhoods with a high proportion of low-income families.

To gain a more complete understanding of the challenge, our department created a partnership with the largest private health-care provider in the county, Kaiser Permanente of Northern California, and the largest public provider of care for the poor, Medi-Cal (our Medicaid system). Both programs already maintained extensive databases of patients and a broad spectrum of asthma "events"—emergency-room visits, but also physician visits, the use of asthma medication, and more. Using these data, we mapped our findings by neighborhood and came up with some vivid pictures. Several areas—particularly those with many low-income families and people of color—showed alarming spikes in emergency-room visits for asthma cases, especially among children. Often these neighborhoods were dealing with poor housing and acute environmental issues, such as proximity to freeways, major shipping ports, or industrial facilities.

But more affluent neighborhoods with quality housing at a distance from free-

ways and industry often showed elevated rates in other asthma indicators, such as purchases of prescription asthma drugs. These data tell us that the asthma epidemic doesn't afflict poor communities alone; it is distributed widely throughout the county, although its appearance may vary by community social status. Surely there is a quality-of-care component, with poorly managed asthma being concentrated in less-affluent communities. This picture did not fit the agenda of any single "interest group"; environ-

grass-roots organizations and brought an appreciation of the social, economic, and environmental issues related to asthma. They recognized that pollution can threaten human health, but also that health is a function of many less tangible factors: patterns of economic development, crime, and access to health clinics, grocery stores, and even green space.

The group agreed: While air pollution is important, it is only the beginning of a description of "community environment" as it relates to health and well



The Air She Breathes: Where public health meets the environment

mental advocates could certainly find evidence for framing asthma as an environmental issue, but groups working for health-care reform, fair housing, or other social-justice issues could all make similar claims.

AS OUR WORK IN ALAMEDA COUNTY continues, it is teaching us important lessons about our own institutional biases. A case in point: As environmental-health specialists, we were initially concerned with pollution arising from traffic and industry and its likely link to asthma. Even before the asthma data became available, however, many of our community-based partners insisted that this concept of "environment" was too narrow. It is noteworthy that many of these community advisers came from

being. Neither health nor pollution could be separated from fundamental social-justice concerns such as housing rights, school quality, jobs, or the distribution of resources in communities. The asthma picture merely reiterated this fact and provided an opportunity around which actors with diverse interests could crystallize.

The final chapters of this story have yet to be written. Locally, the California program—following recommendations from the Alameda County project advisory team—has been collaborating with individuals and groups committed to environmental justice, community economic development, and access to quality health care, schools, and housing. The California story, which is applicable to urban health in general, remains

a demonstration of how “narrow” environmental health issues refused to remain in their neat little boxes. Instead, they not only cut across issues of class, race, income distribution, and public health but provided organizing opportunities in which the connections among all of these issues become visible. By making these connections, we can go back to the future and forge new collations for urban health. **TAP**

Geoffrey Lomax is the former research director for the California Department

of Health Services' Environmental Health Tracking Program. Eric Roberts is the program's research manager and Paul English is its principal investigator. This work was funded by a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Environmental Health. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the sponsors. For more information on the California Environmental Health Tracking Program, visit www.catracking.com.

An Emergent Progressive Majority

Americans are tired of voting against someone. It's time to recruit leaders who'll speak clearly to people's real needs and problems.

BY GLORIA TOTTEN

PROGRESSIVES SHOULD BE OPTIMISTIC as we look toward the 2006 midterm elections. A recent CNN/Gallup Poll shows that a record-high 54 percent of Americans believe that the United States made a mistake in going to war in Iraq. Surging gas prices in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and struggles to keep up with the cost of living are fueling widespread pessimism about President Bush's handling of the economy. According to recent Associated Press polls, only 28 percent of voters think the country is heading in the right direction. An August Harris poll showed that 58 percent of respondents believe Bush is doing an “only fair or poor” job as president, while several new polls at press time recorded his approval at barely 40 percent—the lowest in his presidency. And there's blame to spare: Only 37 percent of the public approves of the way the Republican-controlled Congress is doing its job, the worst grade for lawmakers in eight years.

But optimism alone won't regain control of the Congress or the majority of state legislatures in 2006. It won't elect a progressive president in 2008. And it won't reverse decades of conservative ascent.

Conservatives, first working outside

the Republican Party and ultimately taking it over, have labored for more than 30 years to get where they are today: in control at all levels. They built powerful media and message enterprises to hone their ideas and make those ideas sound reasonable to mainstream Americans. They recruited “movement conservatives” to run for office, trained them to run effectively on a party-line agenda, and systematically fielded them in key state and local races that would nationalize this agenda and mobilize voters up and down the ticket.

In the late 1970s, when Democrats controlled the majority of elected offices from state legislatures to the presidency, conservatives created GOPAC, their candidate and recruitment operation. It was resurgence on the right, the product of new leadership that was willing to look to the long term to win power. Despite having been in the minority for decades, this new conservative Republican leadership knew it must marry the need for short-term victories with a long-term partisan strategy for taking back power. The leaders developed a 10-year plan. And it worked.

PROGRESSIVES HAVE TRADITIONALLY left candidate recruitment to the official arms of the Democratic Party.

But for the last 15 years, the party has engaged in a deliberate strategy to recruit candidates who can largely fund their own campaigns or draw corporate financial support thanks to their conservative fiscal and social positions. The party encouraged candidates to abandon or avoid popular progressive issues in order to try to increase their appeal to swing voters. This has proven to be a failed strategy; Democrats have lost seats in nearly every election. Worse, by trying to moderate their core views and values, Democrats have come to be perceived as weak and indecisive, with no bold ideas of their own.

Consider this from an August Democracy Corps memo by Stan Greenberg and Matt Hogan: “The Democrats are 7 points ahead in the race for Congress and, indeed, have led by an average of 6 points over the last 4 months.... But for all that, the Democrats need to do much more to turn this into a tidal wave. Their own image has not improved and most of the gain in congressional vote margin has come from the Republicans' decline.”

Americans are tired of voting *against* someone. They are seeking candidates who are willing to stand up for something. If progressives want to win elections, they need to recruit leaders who will speak clearly to people's real needs and problems.

That's the challenge my organization and others with similar vision have set out to address. In 2004, Progressive Majority launched the only exclusive, comprehensive program to recruit and train a “farm team” of progressive candidates to run for state and local office. We piloted the program in Washington state, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania in 2004, running 100 candidates—and winning 41 of our races. Notably, of the 59 candidates who lost, 33 continue in the program and are running again. Even when we lose, we grow.

Ours is a strong and successful model for candidate recruitment. First, we identify every legislative opportunity available in the next election and begin aggressively recruiting progressive leaders to run in those races. Second, we train our candidates and their staff on how to

run an effective race. Third, we provide each candidate with myriad political resources, including extensive one-on-one “coaching” on campaign planning, fund raising, message and communications, and more. Finally, we map out the state’s political plan through 2008 so the entire progressive community understands where the political opportunities lie.

Our results suggest that we’re on to something. In 2004, Progressive Majority was one of only two organizations to provide early support to Brian Weinstein, a candidate for the Washington state Senate. Our work in his race, and our advocacy within the progressive community, encouraged the state’s political players to coalesce around Weinstein’s candidacy. His victory, along with that of Craig Pridemore, whom we also supported, flipped control of the Senate in Olympia to Democrats, who went on to pass a record number of progressive bills this last legislative session.

In 2005, Progressive Majority expanded the program to two additional states, Arizona and Colorado. By the end of July, our farm team boasted 167 candidates, including 64 running in 2005, 63 in 2006, and 40 in 2007 or later. Twenty-eight percent are people of color, 48 percent are women, and 22 percent are rank-and-file union members.

Our biggest win in this year’s municipal elections occurred in Wisconsin in April when Mark Harris defeated the conservative eight-year incumbent for Winnebago County executive. Harris eked out a 51-percent victory in the GOP-dominated Fox Valley, where John Kerry received 46 percent last November. A community leader who built a political base while chairing the Oshkosh City Council, Harris ran on a straightforward message of competence and common sense. This was a critical pickup for progressives and demonstrates that we can win in tough districts when we groom leaders from the community.

In keeping with our strategy of identifying true leaders, we recruited Claudia Kauffman, a member of the Nez Perce tribe, to run for state Senate in Washington—after the Democratic Party establishment had advised Kauffman to delay

her decision while encouraging other (read: white) candidates to run. Currently, our staff is working with her to aggressively raise funds to ward off primary opposition. If victorious, she would be the only Native American in the Washington Senate and one of the first ever to serve in that state’s Legislature.

OUR WORK IS BEING DONE IN COLLABORATION with other important endeavors necessary to build a progressive political movement because we understand that, done alone, candidate recruitment and development will not produce concrete progressive policy advancements. In turn, if every other function is performed without sufficient numbers of progressive candidates to carry our messages and engage voters, we will fail to realize genuine and enduring reform. We have formed advisory councils in each of our states—led by the local heads of the labor, women’s, environmental,

civil-rights, education, and health-care organizations—to advise and guide our candidate-recruitment work, thereby ensuring that it is serving the broader progressive movement.

The frustration voters feel is not esoteric. People are struggling to maintain jobs that pay short of a living wage; small-business owners are straining to keep up with rising health-insurance costs; mothers and fathers are losing their sons and daughters in Iraq; those exurban and rural voters that cost Democrats the last presidential election are suffering at the hands of an administration that puts corporations and the wealthy above them.

Real people with real problems—those are the people whose futures are being sacrificed by the conservatives in power. Isn’t it time we gave them leaders they can be proud to support? **TAP**

Gloria Totten is the executive director of Progressive Majority.

New Century, New Challenges

When it comes to the environment, we should think and act differently—but not at the expense of what we’ve already achieved.

BY JAN SCHAKOWSKY

THE DEATH OF ENVIRONMENTALISM has stimulated a lot of debate, and not just at tables where environmentalists gather. It asks questions that are legitimate and necessary to consider: how to fight Wal-Mart, how to win universal health care, how to create a world of limitless opportunity instead of widespread hunger and disease. It suggests the need for a completely new approach to combating global warming—an approach that must reach across the planet to address megacorporate power, economic interests, cultural differences, and individual expectations.

These are 21st-century organizing challenges, made more difficult in the case of global warming by the scientific community’s demand for immediate action to prevent ecological disaster. They require new alliances, new ways of

thinking, new strategies, and new tactics. They require us to define ourselves in new and bold ways, not to change our behavior based on their criticisms or spend time responding to their efforts to define us. What they do not require, however, is that we abandon everything we have learned and accomplished. Our organizing and coalitional skills are the foundation upon which to consolidate the power needed to win.

The whole is bigger than the sum of its parts. Coalition building is the bedrock. Our progressive history is filled with examples, as when firefighters and dump-site communities worked together to pass community-right-to-know legislation, or when conservative faith groups and anti-World Trade Organization activists together won global debt relief. We must build bigger and broader coalitions,

anchored in mutual trust and the ability to move beyond "siloe" issues. Some coalitional issues are overarching, like "clean elections" and electoral reform. Others are similar in spirit, as when ideology trumps science at the National Institutes of Health or when administration officials dismiss the science behind global warming. And others may not be of direct concern to one partner but, by strengthening other coalition members, may make the whole more powerful.

Be bold and proactive, not timid and reactive. As my mother used to tell me, "Stand up straight." Those on the right are constantly trying to define us in the minds and eyes of the media and the public. Don't let them. They want to present us as elitists, as out of touch with Amer-

crimination Against Women, and other international agreements.

Make it real. An oil-company ad now appearing on television asks a woman whether she would give up her car in order to improve the environment. She answers that she wants clean air but that giving up her car would be like giving up chocolate. While the ad goes on to talk about "clean fuels," it damages our message. It caricatures environmentalism as forcing a choice that requires giving up a car or a job, or perhaps freezing in the dark. Whether we are fighting against global warming or for national health care, we need to talk about our issues in personal terms, demonstrating benefits and dismissing false dichotomies. We should highlight the positive trade-offs

hazards threaten their communities.

Electoral politics is essential. At the end of the 20th century, most groups were convinced that being correct on issues was not enough; they had to build political power by engaging in electoral politics. We learned the lesson that voter registration, mobilization, and education is more important than preparing a policy brief, and that training and running progressive candidates can matter more than testifying before Congress.

We need to become even more strategic—not just in focusing resources and developing a "farm team" but also in recognizing that it matters who is in control. Think about what it would mean for progressives if Nancy Pelosi were House speaker and congressional committees were chaired by people like George Miller, John Conyers, Charlie Rangel, and Henry Waxman. Would we still have to work hard to stop global warming or win labor rights? Absolutely. But we wouldn't have to spend our time keeping the Republican leadership from turning back the clock on mercury emissions or fighting against Social Security privatization and the destruction of Head Start. In other words, in making endorsements, it is more strategic to think about who the candidate will support for speaker than whether he or she will co-sponsor a bill that will never see the light of day.

Just do it. We all must do more and do it better; the operative word being "do." We should not be debating whether it is better to act to prevent local utility power-plant emissions or to build support for a strengthened Kyoto agreement. We must do both. We cannot wait to implement a strategy until we are positive it will succeed. Of course we want "achievable wins rather than impractical losses." But—by building power and expanding coalitions, by creating trust and personal respect, and by creating a progressive frame that is inclusive and encompassing—we can turn what is impractical today into what will be achievable tomorrow. **TAP**

Jan Schakowsky represents the 9th District of Illinois and serves on the House Democratic Leadership Team as chief deputy whip.

Voter mobilization is more important than preparing a policy brief. Training and running progressive candidates matters more than testifying before Congress.

ica. But we are people who care about preventing asthma and birth defects, who want children to drink arsenic-free water, who believe that investing in renewable energy and conservation will create good jobs while reducing oil dependence and protecting the environment. Those are majority American values. Our coalitions must aggressively define our values and be just as aggressive in attacking the falsehoods being used against us.

Act locally, act globally. Whether we are talking about the global environment or the global economy, we must build coalitions in our neighborhoods, across the nation, and around the world. During the Central American Free Trade Agreement debate, Central American workers, public-health advocates, people of faith, and elected officials developed joint strategies with their U.S. colleagues. We must build those ties more securely. The Bush administration's refusal to adopt global treaties creates common bonds among environmentalists supporting the Kyoto Protocol on the environment, women's rights activists supporting the United Nations Convention on Eliminating All Forms of Dis-

environmental progress will bring. For instance, investing in renewable energy sources will bring new jobs, and cleaner air and water will lead to lower health-care costs. For these reasons, the Apollo Alliance and other blue-green efforts are critically important.

Diversity is a necessity. We must build coalitions that are racially, geographically, economically, and socially diverse. We are battling wealthy, powerful interests, and we will win only if we put together a coalition that represents the majority. Just as we cannot win if we organize only in blue states, we cannot win if we do not create a movement that from the beginning invites people of color, persons with disabilities, those living in rural communities, and others. The environmental-justice movement has succeeded in building diverse coalitions by uniting allies in civil-rights, education, legal, medical, and scientific organizations. Currently, a coalition of those organizations is working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that the government listens to the concerns of stakeholders and community groups when environmental

Death Warmed Over

Beyond environmentalism: imagining possibilities
as large as the crisis that confronts us

BY MICHAEL SHELLENBERGER AND TED NORDHAUS

JAMES HOWARD KUNTSLER BEGINS *THE LONG EMERGENCY*, his new book warning that the world is running out of oil, by quoting psychologist Carl Jung as saying, "People cannot stand too much reality."

The quote is wrongly attributed. It was T.S. Eliot who said, "Humankind cannot stand too much reality." But the quote and the Jungian slip speak volumes about Kunstler and kindred, well-intentioned progressive authors. Like Jared Diamond's *Collapse*, which purports to explain why once-powerful societies are driven into extinction, and Tom Frank's *What's the Matter with Kansas?*, which faulted Kansans for failing to grasp their own economic self-interest, Kunstler's book contends that the ignorant masses are suffering from what the left used to call false-consciousness—in this case, about energy consumption. For the people to be saved, they presumably must let go of their irrational consumer, religious, or ideological fantasies and start recognizing their true self-interest.

When this kind of condescension fails to induce the desired behavior change, environmentalists and liberals become angry or bewildered and see the public as irrational, in denial, or just plain foolish. Which reminds us of something Jung actually did say: "If one does not understand a person, one tends to regard him as a fool."

Today, with all three branches of the federal government in the hands of the radical right, environmental, liberal, and Democratic leaders continue to believe that the public is with us on the issues. "My view is that the Democrats almost won the election," Kerry media man Bob Shrum said repeatedly after Republicans both re-elected George W. Bush and increased their control of Congress. "I think what we are looking at is the rebirth of environmentalism," one environmental-group executive told *The New York Times*.

Explain to us again: Who can't stand too much reality?

WE HAVE SEEN THE ENEMY

Here's another thing Jung actually said: "Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves."

This was certainly the case for us. Before writing "The Death of Environmentalism," the two of us had spent the bulk of our

professional careers becoming increasingly irritated while executing failed environmental strategies. We went on this way for years. But eventually we were reminded of Jung's great contribution to the understanding of the human mind: that we project our inner demons onto others.

What if the problem was *not* that environmentalists just didn't get it? What if the problem was that *we* didn't get it? Maybe there was something about environmentalism (and thus ourselves) that none of us understood.

So, in the summer of 2004, we set off to find out. We proceeded to interview more than two dozen environmental leaders and funders. We read everything about global warming we could get our hands on.

By the time we were through, we had discovered that, indeed, there was more going on than met the eye. When we started our research we believed that there was something wrong *strategically*. What we didn't comprehend was that something might be wrong *conceptually*.

Treating global warming as an "environmental" problem and framing its solutions as technical, we concluded, lay at the heart of the movement's political failings.

The problem was not simply that environmentalists didn't get it. The problem was that environmentalists could *never* get it as long as we remained environmentalists. The way we conceptualized the problem analytically was getting in the way of what we needed to do politically.

We suspected that this finding might irritate some people. But we could no longer pretend that the problems we faced were nothing that a few more media campaigns (stopglobalwarming.com), or even a new name (sustainability), couldn't fix.

We expected controversy. What we didn't expect was that the essay would become a projection screen for the hopes and fears of the broader progressive movement. Hence our thesis: Everything that irritates you about "The Death of Environmentalism" can lead you to an understanding of yourself.

DEATH AS A PROJECTION SCREEN

Which brings us to the first reaction, namely that the debate over environmentalism is just so much navel gazing. "We know

what we need to do," this line of reasoning goes. "Let's stop all this hand-wringing and get to the hard work of politics." It reminded us of the insistence by Democratic operatives that John Kerry "almost won" the election. Whenever you hear someone begin a sentence with, "If it weren't for a few thousand votes in Ohio ...," you can be pretty sure an argument to stay the course will follow.

Others went so far as to say that our paper gave comfort to the enemy. One environmental leader asserted that there was already a robust debate going on within the environmental movement, and that "Shellenberger and Nordhaus have set that debate back, not moved it forward." Others, including a former Sierra Club director, were upset not simply that the debate was happening but that it had been triggered by two "eco-nobodies."

What really seemed to bother the national environmental leadership was the title. Many privately acknowledged that they agreed with much of what we wrote, "But did you have to call it 'Death?'" they asked. People posted comments to blogs literally insisting that they weren't dead. In a particularly surreal discussion at Harvard, a fellow panelist attempted to prove environmentalism's vitality with a PowerPoint presentation that began with the famous clip from *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, where a frail, first-century Roman father protests, "I'm not dead! I feel fine!" as he's heaved onto a passing mortician's cart by his son. It all illustrated two key points we had made in our essay: that environmentalists are overly literal and that they constantly and unwittingly activate their opponents' frames.

Many readers couldn't figure out where we stood in the tired debate between "national" and "grass-roots" environmentalists. Because the object of our analysis was the leadership of the largest organizations and foundations that determine national strategy, many saw in our essay an embrace of grass-roots environmentalism. But others felt we had disrespected grass-roots activists by not holding them up as exemplars of the one true environmental movement.

A few were bothered that we attributed so many of environmentalists' failures to their incuriosity about the "human" (read: social) sciences, like social psychology, and their scientific fetishization of the "natural" sciences, like climatology and biology. "Mainstream national groups made a lot of progress over the past 40 years by maintaining scientific credibility as a touchstone of their efforts," one prominent environmental scientist wrote in an open e-mail to environmental leaders and funders. "Environmentalism identified with a scientific, rationalist approach, and drew a larger circle around itself and its positions accordingly."

Having argued that such "rationalism" is, paradoxically, unscientific, and having proposed ditching the antiquated concepts of "nature" and "the environment," some suggested that we had gone off the postmodern deep end (tantamount to being French). "How can you save the environment if you don't believe it exists?" one particularly literal environmental-studies professor asked us shortly after the Monty Python moment at Harvard.

WHAT A CONCEPT

Why do we consider childhood asthma exacerbated by air pollution to be an environmental problem but not asthma exacerbated by lack of treatment? Why is habitat for nonhuman animals an environmental issue while habitat (a.k.a. "housing") for human animals is not? Why are extinctions caused by meteors considered "natural" but ones caused by humans "unnatural"?

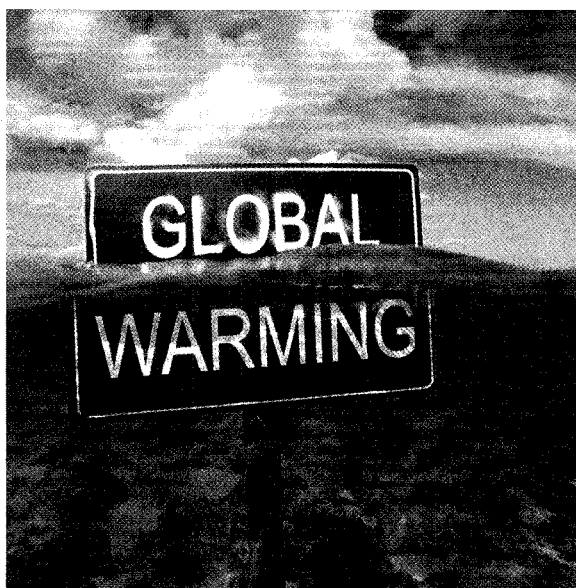
You don't need a Ph.D. in linguistics to see that there's something funny about the concept of "the environment." If the concept includes humans, everything is "environmental," and it has little use other than being a poor synonym for "everything." If the concept excludes humans, it is scientifically specious (not to mention politically suicidal).

Environmentalism's rickety underpinnings worked well enough in the 1960s and '70s. But the mental model created to deal with smog and create national parks isn't up to the challenge of dealing with the profoundly complex and global ecological (and political, cultural, and economic) crises of the 21st century. Even if the environmental movement staves off oil drilling in Alaska—where global warming is melting the tundra and making the forests vulnerable to disease—what will remain?

This conceptual point was at the heart of our essay, yet conspicuously ignored by most readers. As a consequence, many misread our reflections on the New Apollo Project as little more than advocacy for a shiny new coalition. What we were attempting to suggest, perhaps poorly, was emphatically *not* that environmentalists should form what political scientist Bill Chaloupka calls "Kumbaya coalitions." Nor were we suggesting that environmentalists should quit their jobs and start working on other progressive issues like health care, labor, or civil rights.

Rather, we argued that anyone who cares about global warming must speak to the material and nonmaterial aspirations that Americans have for themselves and their country. Treating Apollo as a laundry list of technical policy proposals and endorsing organizations overlooks its potential to create a new politics grounded in vision and values, not problems and issues.

Of course, if we can't inject Apollo's vision and values into



contested political space—where politicians and others have to take sides on specific, controversial proposals—Apollo risks going the way of “smart growth,” an idea that everyone is for but nobody understands. The notion that social-change omelettes can be made without breaking political eggs is a fantasy that needs to die along with the notion that dealing with global warming could ever be “above politics.”

By now it should go without saying that we could just as easily have written a “death of” report about any of the special interests that comprise the liberal coalition. The fact that every two years a moribund environmentalism marries itself to a moribund liberalism in an effort to elect Democratic candidates is part of the problem. All of the progressive special interests will continue to fail politically as long as they conceptualize their interests so narrowly and conduct their politics so literally.

For the last 15 years, environmentalists have publicly debated global-warming deniers under the assumption that a) they can actually “win” the debate and b) once the public learns “the facts” things will start to change. What they should have done instead is built support for an agenda that inspires people regardless of whether they believe global warming is real. The result has been politically disastrous: Having rested their agenda on proving the truth of global warming, attacking the science is for the carbon lobby what attacking John Kerry’s war record was for Karl Rove.

And so it came to pass that environmental groups—so intimidated by right-wing attacks on “the science”—refused in late August to publicly connect global warming to Hurricane Katrina, which pummeled New Orleans. “It’s like it’s 1960 and we’re afraid to suggest that cigarettes might be killing people,” one foundation executive lamented in an e-mail to environmental leaders.

It was up to climatologists from MIT and the National Center for Atmospheric Research, who had recently published major studies making the connection between warming oceans and hurricane severity in both *Nature* and *Science*, to put two and two together. With congressional Democrats following the environmentalists’ lead, it was once again left to high-ranking European officials, including Britain’s chief scientist, to criticize the Bush administration.

POST-ENVIRONMENTAL ASPIRATIONS IN THE FACE OF (UN)NATURAL DISASTERS

Environmentalists have spent the last 40 years telling Americans what they can’t have and can’t be without ever telling people what they can have and can be. The new, post-environmental politics must focus more on unleashing human possibility than constraining human activity. If this new, aspirational politics succeeds, Bill McKibben recently wrote, “it won’t be environmentalism anymore. It will be something much more important.”

In all the upset over “The Death of Environmentalism” we, along with former Sierra Club President Adam Werbach, bowed out of the national Apollo Alliance. Since then we have sought new avenues to advance the Apollo concept. Recently we worked with Bracken Hendricks, formerly the executive director of the Apollo Alliance and now a senior fellow at the Breakthrough In-

stitute and the Center for American Progress, to create a proposal for an Automotive Competitiveness and Accountability Act.

With General Motors and Ford teetering perilously close to bankruptcy and hemorrhaging tens of thousands of jobs, Congress may be asked once again to bail out Detroit. After September 11, Congress bailed out the airline industry and demanded nothing in return. This time, Congress should demand accountability.

The act recognizes that American automakers are burdened with massive health-care costs that their foreign competitors, blessed with national health-care systems, don’t have. This competitive disadvantage partly explains Detroit’s failure to invest adequately in research and development and thus produce better vehicles. But Detroit is not free from blame: The Big Three have stubbornly refused to innovate and are now stuck selling gas-guzzlers that fewer Americans want.

What’s needed is a new deal for the auto industry, one that is entirely voluntary. If automakers want help covering the health-care costs of their workers, they must, under the Competitiveness and Accountability Act, increase the efficiency of their vehicles. (A fuller description of the Competitiveness and Accountability Act can be read at www.thebreakthrough.org.)

Countless other opportunities for political innovation emerge once we free ourselves from environmentalism’s assumptions. Consider the way environmentalists have long treated prevention and adaptation as a question of either/or rather than both/and, as though we must choose between caps on greenhouse gases and zoning development away from floodplains. “Do we have so much faith in our own adaptability that we will risk destroying the integrity of the entire global ecological system?” asked Al Gore in his 1992 best seller, *Earth in the Balance*. “Believing that we can adapt to just about anything is ultimately a kind of laziness, an arrogant faith in our ability to react in time to save our own skin.”

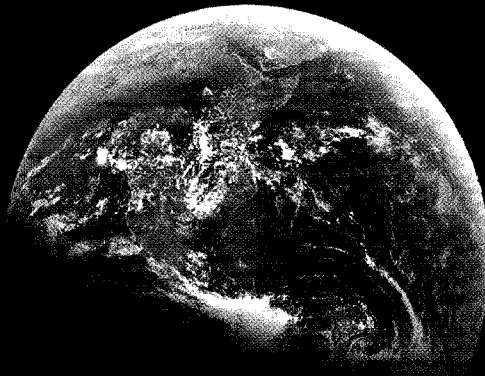
But in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, there’s no question that the public will start demanding government action to help communities adapt to future disasters. And as soon as we begin the debate over adaptation to global warming, we can put an end to the debate over whether global warming is real.

That the environmental community has chosen to sit on the sidelines is probably a good thing. It will make for much a better politics if developers, unions, doctors, and relief organizations take the lead in demanding investments in things like stronger levees as well as clean energy.

We have little doubt that our exhortations to imagine possibilities as large as the crisis in front of us strike many as fantasy, but in the words of Jung, “Without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever yet come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of the imagination is incalculable.” **TAP**

Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus are managing partners of American Enviroics (www.AmericanEnviroics.com) and directors of The Breakthrough Institute (www.theBreakthrough.org). The Death of Environmentalism and the Birth of a New American Politics will be published in fall 2006 by Houghton Mifflin.

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Continued from page 24

shareholders that everything is under control. This is why Bush stayed on vacation, even leaving the Crawford ranch (long after it was clear that Katrina would have enormous consequences) to go to Arizona to speak on Medicare and to California to try, one more listless and dishonest time, to defend the war. His instinct was to act as if everything was fine, everything was normal.

That's not what a real president does. It's not even what a good corporate CEO does. A good corporate CEO with a broader understanding of shareholder interests (and there are many) takes real action. But Bush has, in real life, been a fantastically abysmal corporate leader (see Harken Energy and Arbusto Oil). Back then, when Bush was in private life, shareholders who were capable of bailing him out of trouble were looked upon favorably. Today, certain shareholders—like those in New Orleans' 9th Ward, say—get less attention. The corporate model of governance, which the media so limned after 9-11, failed miserably during Katrina.

Finally, the contempt for empirical evidence had its obvious consequences. Fantasy-based conservative government has been with us since Ronald Reagan's time, but in the Bush era, it has beheld its triumph. The warnings about the insufficient levees protecting New Orleans were many, and were issued on multiple occasions over the years. But the administration ignored the warnings, cutting funding by 44 percent since 2001, forcing the New Orleans branch of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to impose a hiring freeze. Those excised funds, or many of them, were—speaking of contempt for empirical evidence—diverted to Iraq. Then, as we learned in the aftermath of the hurricane's devastation, FEMA, the White House, and other federal agencies knew by at least the Friday before the storm hit land (on a Mon-

day) that the need to get systems into place to help people who would end up stuck in New Orleans was dire. This evidence, too, was ignored. Evidence is for liberals.

There were personal failures here, by Bush, Chertoff, Brown, and doubtless many others. But the far greater failures, it's absolutely important to keep in mind, were ideological. The conservative belief system exacerbated Katrina's effects. And that, ultimately, is the field on which the coming battle needs to be fought.

DEMOCRATS IN CONGRESS HATE TO TALK ABOUT IDEOLOGY, and in some ways I can't say that I blame them. For most of them, there is absolutely no profit in it. For 25 years, the essential dynamic of Washington politics has been that the Republicans advance an idea and the Democrats develop a rearguard response, a response that says, "Yes, we, too (believe in a strong defense, are troubled by Hollywood values, want to reduce taxes, etc.), we just think the approach has to be tempered with this or that." We debate the pros and cons of conservative ideology. But only rarely are liberal principles even on the table.

There may never again be a chance quite like this to draw a crystal-clear line from the A of conservative ideology to the B of the administration's Katrina failures to the C of the broader lessons about American society. The right, we can be sure, will fight to ensure that its syllogism—the A of bloated bureaucracy to the B of government failure to the C of replacing government action with private relief—is the one that takes hold of the public consciousness. Now is the time to make the kinds of arguments Democrats haven't made for a generation.

Against the three conservative assumptions that worsened the disaster, we liberals must counterpose *our* beliefs. We cher-

UNFORTUNATELY, HE KNEW

From the editors: On May 23, 2005, Prospect senior correspondent Chris Mooney, whose "Inferior Design" appeared in our September issue, wrote a piece for our Web site about his hometown of New Orleans. Fully three months before Hurricane Katrina hit home, Mooney wrote:

"A slow-moving Category 4 or Category 5 hurricane ... could generate a 20-foot surge that would easily overwhelm the levees of New Orleans Soon the geographical 'bowl' of the Crescent City would fill up with the waters of the lake, leaving those unable to evacuate with little option but to cluster on rooftops—terrain they would have to share with hungry rats, fire ants, nutria, snakes, and perhaps alligators. The water itself would become a festering stew of sewage, gasoline, refinery chemicals, and debris."

Noting that "a direct hit from a powerful hurricane on New Orleans could furnish perhaps the largest natural catastrophe ever experienced on U.S. soil," Mooney surveyed the U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers' plans and wrote that time was running out on protecting his hometown.

After Katrina struck, he added the following thoughts.

Recently my mother, a refugee from Hurricane Katrina now holed up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pointed out something that had never occurred to me before: Despite having grown up in New Orleans, played football there, and gotten drunk for the first time there at a ridiculously young age, I had never had the quintessential experience of fleeing the city in fear of a hurricane.

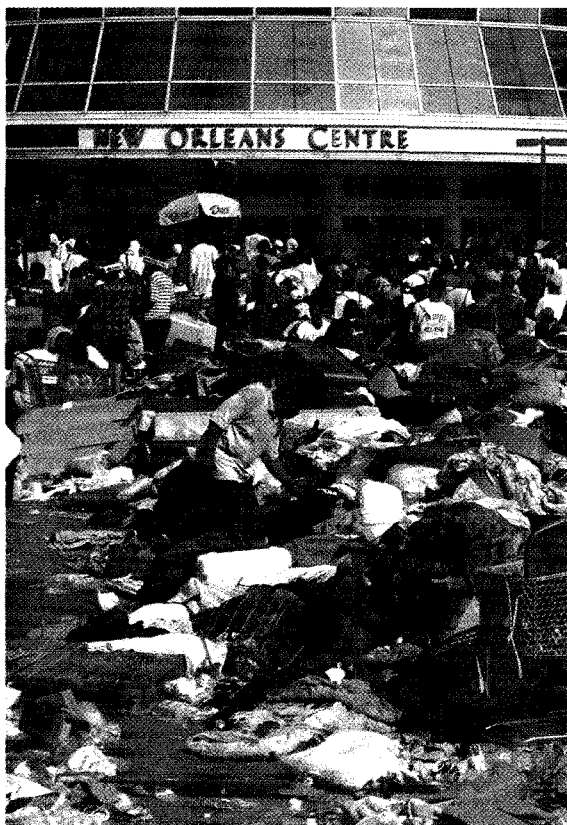
It was all a matter of timing. In 1995, the year the Atlantic Ocean kicked into its current, active storm cycle, I went away to college—as far away from New Orleans as possible. So I spent my undergraduate autumns with only a vague awareness that my family was, from time to time, busy fleeing nature. I never had to sit in traffic for hours just to get a few miles beyond the »



Crash On The Levee: Our writer saw it coming

ish individual liberty, but we also believe in a community in which each of us has equal worth. We believe in robust government to do what the corporations refuse to do, or are not constituted to do well. Finally, we believe in reason and evidence, and we believe that it is a core responsibility of government to respond to them.

It's been 25 long years since the leaders of the Democratic Party as a whole stood up and said these things. About 80 million Americans, those under 25 years of age, have never lived in a country in which our values were defended tenaciously—not just by Paul Wellstone or Ted Kennedy or a handful of safe-seat members of Congress but by the entire Democratic Party leadership. Another 60 million, those between 25 and 40, have no adult memory of a class of political leaders pugnaciously championing liberal values. Bill Clinton governed that way more than he talked that way; and just as one can understand why Democrats don't talk about ideology, one can also sympathize with the way Clinton felt hemmed in by the peculiar insanity of the jihad that he faced every day he was in office, which made him



and the blowhards on radio and television. America may not be Washington, but its fate is shaped by what comes out of Washington. If ever there were a moment that should remind the Democrats why they came to Washington in the first place, this is it. **TAP**

feel that he was unusually short of political capital to spend.

Today's Democrats, it's quite true, have even less political capital than Clinton did. But they also have less to lose. And they make the fatal mistake of confusing the right-wing noise machine with America. But the right is not America. Washington, dominated by propagandists and those who need to be invited to the propagandists' parties, is not America. America is a far better place than Washington, and a far better thing than the right-wing noise machine. Americans—60-some percent of whom, after all, disapprove of the job this president is doing—are open to another argument about how our society should be arranged.

The American Prospect will make this argument, as will others of our bent. But ultimately, the Democrats have to make it, and they have to make it in unison and without being afraid of the bullies across the aisle

city. I never had to return to find that the storm had turned aside, but that those who did not evacuate had been living it up at hurricane parties—drinking the frozen red drinks that are also defiantly called Hurricanes, and scoffing at those who fled.

After college came visits to New Orleans at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and two more prolonged stays. But it was never hurricane season, and I never allowed myself to stay too long. I distrusted New Orleans, I think, because of how effortlessly it lived up to its nickname, the Big Easy. I felt it wanted to ensnare me in its sun-and-alcohol-soaked embrace.

Yet at the same time, as a writer on science, the city intrigued me. I could view New Orleans with cool detachment and dissect its odd behavior. I could download storm-surge models and slowly shake my head. Who were these strange life forms that risked catastrophe each year and thought nothing of it? It

was one thing to be relaxed and laid back about underage drinking, corrupt brake-tag stations, and ridiculous debutante balls; it was another to take such an approach to impending cataclysm—or so I thought. But then, I was never really a true New Orleanian. When northeasterners mispronounced the city's name (saying "New Or-leens," as they so often did), I would dutifully correct them, but my heart was never in it. I sought out other coolly detached scientists and engineers, who were equally baffled by the city's behavior. They'd been warning about "the big one" for years, and few mustered a lot of energy to disagree with them—but no one sprang into action, either.

On one trip into town, I asked a few of these experts to drive me around the city. There are—or were—places in New Orleans where you can stand atop a levee and have a sudden, terrifying epiphany. I became, in my own small way, a Jeremiah about risks to the

city. My brother, at least, paid attention. Repeated e-mails persuaded him to purchase flood insurance for his home in mid-city. With Katrina boasting 175-mile-per-hour winds and an eye the size of a small state as it perched atop the Gulf of Mexico, he called to thank me for warning him about the danger.

Reality prevails in these situations, ultimately, and science won't be ignored forever. After all the destruction, death, and misery, New Orleans—if there is still to be a New Orleans—will have to radically change its ways. It will have to rebuild to make itself much less vulnerable. It will have to listen to computer models. Its residents won't ever shrug off another impending storm. Hurricane parties will seem unthinkable.

It will never be the same.

Chris Mooney is a *Prospect* senior correspondent. His first book, *The Republican War on Science*, was published in September.

They're Ba-ack

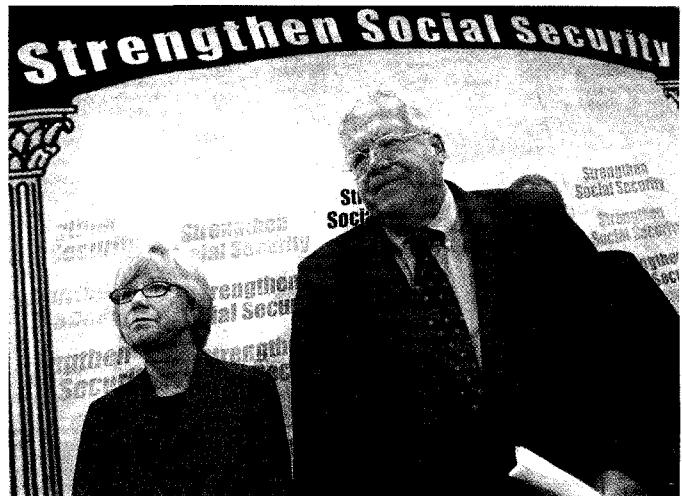
Actually, they never went away. The Social Security privatizers, quiet over the summer, are merely gearing up for the next battle in a long war.

BY JOE CONASON

IN AUGUST, ON THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING of the Social Security Act, the White House released a three-sentence presidential statement. "For 70 years," it read, "Social Security has been a vital program and helped millions of America's seniors in retirement. The Social Security system is sound for today's seniors, but there is a hole in the safety net for younger workers. On this 70th anniversary, we renew our commitment to save and strengthen Social Security for our children and grandchildren, and keep the promise of Social Security for future generations."

So uninspiring and perfunctory were the remarks attributed to President Bush to "celebrate" the historic date that they might well have been taken as a sign of surrender rather than determination. Yet those who know the stubborn Bush best insist that he has yet to abandon a policy objective cherished for decades by him and the conservative movement he represents. "I don't think he's lost any of his zeal for Social Security reform," claims Republican strategist and lobbyist Charles Black, a long-time Bush ally and former partner of the late GOP Chairman Lee Atwater.

Zealous as he may be, Bush is now relying on congressional Republicans to pursue his mission. While many remain wary of the electoral price they may pay for pushing privatization, House Speaker Dennis Hastert has endorsed a bill that would privatize a portion of the Social Security surplus by placing U.S. Treasury bonds in individual accounts. The so-called GROW accounts, sponsored by Jim McCrery of Louisiana, who chairs the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security, would do nothing to ensure the system's solvency—and in fact would undermine the trust fund on which future benefits depend and balloon the federal deficit without significantly increasing household savings. There's no telling yet how post-Hurricane Katrina politics will affect the bill's chances. It may well make it through the House, although it appears to



Round Two: The GOP House, led by Speaker Dennis Hastert, plans to try again on Social Security privatization this fall.

have little chance of passage in the Senate.

Whether such legislation is a clever means to revive privatization or merely an "exit strategy" for the White House remains to be seen. But what is important to understand—no matter what may transpire as the congressional session concludes—is that the Republican Party, the conservative movement, and their corporate allies remain committed to dismantling Social Security, if not this year then next, or whenever the first opportunity arises.

As Paul Krugman suggested in a column arguing that privatization "seems to be dead for the time being," the stalled Bush initiative provides perspective on politics in our time, with the White House habitually "misrepresenting its goals, lying about the facts, and abusing its control of government agencies."

The privatization crusade also offers a broader lesson in the strategies of modern conservatism—notably, how the right mobilizes corporate power behind a false front of "diversity." The creation of a conservatism that "looks like America" is among the most significant political successes of the past 30 years—a period that happens to coincide with the first serious drive to dismantle Social Security since the end of the New Deal.

This article is adapted from Joe Conason's forthcoming book, The Raw Deal: How the Bush Republicans Plan to Destroy Social Security and the Legacy of the New Deal, which will be published by PoliPoint Press this month.

FOR MOST OF THE PAST CENTURY, CONSERVATISM REPRESENTED a self-conscious ideological minority with few pretensions to mass political appeal. Its authors and advocates, most of them frankly elitist, would have been offended if told that they ought to represent, or at least claim to represent, the true interests of women, racial minorities, the young, the old, or the middle class. Conservatives saw themselves as the upholders of an older tradition that regarded sexual and racial empowerment not as an advancement of society but as a threat to the social order.

Whether that traditional outlook has really changed or merely accommodated change, the perception of conservatism has shifted drastically. Americans of all races, religions, social classes, and sexual identities are willing to align themselves with the right. That shift, with all its consequences for American politics, has resulted from a highly conscious effort by conservative organizations to appeal to groups across the social boundaries that the old ideological elite would not—or could not—approach.

Often as they may mock liberals for indulging in “identity politics” and “dividing America,” conservatives have spent huge amounts of money and substantial intellectual capital to pander to the same groups—or at least to create the appearance of doing so. In the conservative drive to destroy Social Security, it has been particularly important—and challenging—for them to manufac-

ture the illusion of universal appeal. That this illusion became widely accepted during the past few decades is a testament to the persistence of those who sought to fabricate it, and to the transformation of conservatism’s own image during this era.

Analysis, and the Scaife, Olin, and Smith Richardson foundations didn’t exist back then. Despite all the changes in technology and society that have occurred since the Depression era, however, the fundamental interests and ideologies that were hostile to progressive goals have scarcely changed since then.

In substance if not in form, the foundations and organizations that have financed, conceived, and organized the campaign to phase out Social Security bear a close resemblance to the old elites that bitterly opposed the New Deal. As historian Kenneth Davis explains, those Depression-era titans of corporate power and wealth boasted “a large control over mass communications ... an abundance of money with which to finance political campaigns ... and powerful legislative lobbies.” In short, a situation not so very different from that which exists in America today. Today’s privatizers represent the same interests as the program’s old opponents (and some, including former Delaware Governor Pete du Pont and right-wing philanthropist Richard Mellon Scaife, happen to be the direct descendants of FDR’s ancient antagonists), but today they operate under friendlier-sounding names and more inclusive-looking fronts.

THE RIGHT-WING RACE CARD

On a weekday morning in July 2004, a chance mishap led to a brief, unscripted encounter on cable television that revealed how modern conservatism seeks to manufacture the appearance of broad public support for the narrowest elements of its agenda.

Viewers of C-SPAN’s *Washington Journal* were expecting to see an interview of a black conservative. Mychal Massie, a retired businessman affiliated with a right-wing African American organization known as Project 21, was scheduled to appear at 9:30 a.m. But

Massie never arrived at the C-SPAN studio on Capitol Hill because his car got a flat tire. Someone else from Project 21 had to rush over to take his place in front of the camera. Nobody was available on such short notice except the group’s executive director.

This sudden change clearly stunned Robb Harlston, the C-SPAN anchor hosting *Washington Journal* that morning, who also happens to be black. Staring at the man who had walked into the studio and introduced himself as Project 21’s executive director, Harlston couldn’t help blurting the obvious on live television. “Um ... Project 21 ... a program for conservative African Americans ... you’re not African American.”

Harlston was quite right: David Almasi, the executive director and sole employee of a group purporting to speak for African Americans, was undeniably a white man.

Joshua Holland, a writer for *The Gadflyer* who watched this spectacle unfold on his television screen, aptly described Almasi’s surprise appearance as “an awkward Wizard of Oz moment.” It laid bare the real relationship between what appeared to be a black grass-roots organization and its sponsors in the Republican political apparatus.

Almasi, whose résumé describes him as a “public-relations veteran” with experience at several conservative outfits in Washington, quickly tried to explain away his embarrassing white-

C-SPAN host Robb Harlston blurted the obvious:

“Um ... Project 21 ... a program for conservative African Americans ... you’re not African American.”

ture the illusion of universal appeal. That this illusion became widely accepted during the past few decades is a testament to the persistence of those who sought to fabricate it, and to the transformation of conservatism’s own image during this era.

Yet although much has changed in American politics since Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act on August 14, 1935, much remains surprisingly similar. FDR faced the unwavering hostility of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which have now renewed the angry struggle of those early days. Now, however, these powerful organizations understand that voters don’t trust big business, so they hide behind other names. Along with the Business Roundtable, NAM and the chamber are promoting privatization behind two innocuous-sounding fronts: the Coalition for the Modernization and Protection of America’s Social Security, or COMPASS, and the Alliance for Worker Retirement Security (which sounds like it might have been founded by the labor movement).

In Roosevelt’s day, the Republican right lacked the sophisticated “noise machine” that now dominates American political discourse through talk radio and cable television. The Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, the Club for Growth, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), the National Center for Policy

ness. "I want to make clear right at the beginning," he said, "that I'm an employee, I'm an employee of Project 21, my bosses are the [black] members of Project 21, the volunteers ... I take my marching orders from them, not from anybody else." Actually, Almasi takes his marching orders—and his paycheck—from his real bosses at the National Center for Public Policy Research (NCPPR), a Washington-based right-wing think tank and direct-mail outfit that created Project 21 as an "initiative" more than a decade ago. The aim was to put black faces on conservative messages—through an entity operated and funded by white conservatives.

The NCPPR is very well connected in Washington Republican circles. Until October 2004, the group's board included Jack Abramoff, the once-powerful lobbyist and Republican activist currently under investigation by the Justice Department and the Senate Commerce Committee for swindling Indian tribes and corrupting members of Congress. (Over the summer he was indicted on unrelated fraud charges involving a Florida casino-boat company he co-owned with a New York businessman.) Abramoff funneled substantial sums into the NCPPR, but money from dubious benefactors alone hasn't kept the center afloat. Like Cato and Heritage, the smaller think tank has received a stream of annual subsidies for decades from the Scaife, Castle Rock (Coors), and Bradley foundations that total well into the millions of dollars. Sophisticated conservatives have long understood that they can never succeed in dismantling Social Security—or achieving their other long-term objectives—if the only visible and enthusiastic supporters of their policies are wealthy white men.

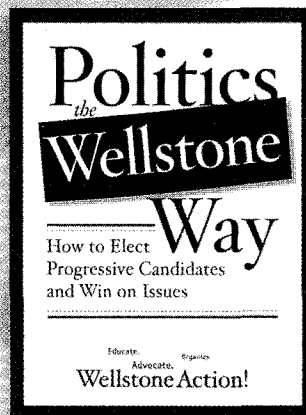
Constituency-oriented organizations like Project 21 fulfill various purposes, from recruiting fresh faces to deflecting charges of racism to attacking established civil-rights and advocacy organizations. A right-wing black minister such as Project 21 member (and publicity hound) the Reverend Jesse Lee Peterson sounds more credible than a white conservative when he appears on FOX News Channel to complain that by protecting Social Security, "the Democratic Party is working to keep black folks on the plantation of the government." Nothing could be more useful to the privatization campaign than erecting that kind of populist facade.

Convincing African Americans that Social Security is a "bad deal" for them and their families has been a key element of the overall privatization strategy for more than two decades. This has been a conservative line of argument since 1983, when the National Center for Policy Analysis—yet another right-wing think tank, based in Dallas—issued a study claiming that the average young black male wouldn't live long enough to collect retirement benefits. According to the center's Web site, its findings "appeared on the front page of countless newspapers across the country."

Playing the race card has remained a favorite gambit of the privatization lobby, with Project 21 and other groups disgorging piles of reports, studies, press releases, and op-ed columns over the past decade devoted to the same theme: Social Security is unfair to black Americans.

Bush himself expanded on this theme on January 24, when he held a closed meeting at the White House with about 20

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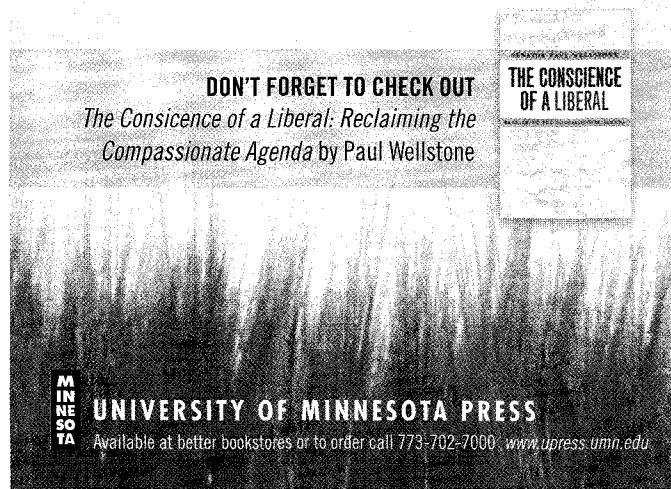
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prominent black conservatives—mostly clergymen, business executives, and lawyers—associated with Cato, Heritage, Project 21, and other groups that served as convenient props to deliver his message. “African American males die sooner than other males do,” according to the president, “which means the system is inherently unfair to a certain group of people.”

Authoritative studies and government actuaries have debunked that claim repeatedly over the years. In 2003, the Government Accountability Office issued a new report that again found no discrimination against blacks in the distribution of Social Security benefits. Black Americans are skeptical about these expressions of concern from the president and other conservatives: Polls show that black voters have rejected Bush’s plan even more decisively than their fellow citizens.

UNDER THE ASTROTURF CARPET

More broadly, organizations of varying sizes and descriptions have emerged to sell privatization to a skeptical public. Some of these groups appear to exist only as Web sites with no identifiable leadership, such as the strange Retiresafe.org; others feature the same few well-known names associated with the Cato Institute and the President’s Commission to Strengthen Social Security; others seem to function strictly as tentacles of White House deputy chief of staff (and privatization whip) Karl Rove. In keeping with the “message discipline” of the Bush White House, they coordinate constantly and repeat the same phrases about “strengthening Social Security” with “personal accounts.”

So many of these organizations have cropped up that the privatization lobby has come to resemble a conglomerate metastasizing out of control. Aside from the traditional array of major right-wing edifices—including Cato, Heritage, AEI, Americans for Tax Reform, the National Center for Policy Analysis, the National Center for Public Policy Research, the Hoover Institution, and the Manhattan Institute—the privatization coalition includes a number of additional entities of varying authenticity.

Many of these other groups exist as little more than letterheads and Web sites. To understand the lobby’s motives and strategies, it is instructive to examine such pure astroturf entities as For Our Grandchildren, RetireSafe.org, and Women for a Social Security Choice. That last group was set up by Leanne Abdnor, a veteran corporate lobbyist and Republican activist, who has declined to reveal the sources of its funding. It has no members.

Abdnor herself is virtually a human template of the privatization network. Back in the Nixon era, she began her Washington career as an assistant to Senator Strom Thurmond. She became a lobbyist and eventually was hired to represent Koch Industries—founding corporate patron of the Cato Institute—on Capitol Hill. Ten years ago, she joined Cato as the think tank’s vice president of external affairs. She is currently the executive director of Women for a Social Security Choice and serves on the national advisory council of For Our Grandchildren (still another astroturf outfit). Abdnor, who frequently appears on radio and television to represent the “female perspective” on Social Security, has told reporters that her group is “independent of the White House.” But she worked as a supporting act for several of

Bush’s town meetings last spring, appearing with him in Florida, Colorado, and Arizona.

Outfits like Project 21 and Women for a Social Security Choice don’t need to succeed in any conventional sense. By manufacturing the appearance of diversity, they have achieved as much as their creators could reasonably expect. For conservatives, courting women and minorities is an unavoidable if often unrewarding political necessity.

THE GRIFTERS

In some ways the most pressing propaganda target for Bush’s privatization network is the elderly, whose political power must be neutralized before Social Security can be dismantled. With more than 35 million members, the nonpartisan AARP is undoubtedly the most powerful citizen lobby in Washington. AARP’s advertising blitz against privatization—combined with efforts by the labor movement, the Campaign for America’s Future, and other progressive grass-roots groups—frustrated the enormously expensive campaign undertaken by Bush’s corporate and political allies last winter and spring.

Aside from annoying the president, AARP presented a tempting target to what might be called the “grifter” element of the Republican right. Older people tend to be more conservative politically, yet their interests are represented in Washington by an organization that conservatives deride as liberal. It was inevitable that conservatives would seek to contest the sprawling political terrain controlled by the senior-citizen organization. But the hucksters who challenged AARP over privatization brought no credit on their cause or to the president.

The right-wing group known as United Seniors Association, or USA Next, has nagged and needled AARP for years without attracting much attention. With the commencement of the struggle over Social Security, however, came new opportunities.

The man who created United Seniors in 1991 was ultra-right direct-mail impresario Richard Viguerie, an industry pioneer and dedicated ideologue who has yearned to abolish Social Security ever since he worked on Barry Goldwater’s presidential campaign. Under his leadership, United Seniors protected the interests of seniors about as reliably as Colonel Sanders protects the interests of chickens. He originated the direct-mail “Social Security” ploy later used by dozens of groups, notably the National Center for Public Policy Research, to separate senior citizens from their money.

On United Seniors letterhead, Viguerie regularly sent ominous, official-looking letters to elderly voters, telling them that politicians had “spent all the money” in the Social Security Trust Fund. To rescue their retirement, he urged the jittery seniors to send checks immediately to his post-office box. He churned out these mailings by the millions while pocketing a hefty proportion of the profits—and prompting investigations by state and federal agencies.

Viguerie has since moved on, but United Seniors continues under the leadership of one Charlie Jarvis, a religious-right activist and former Reagan administration official. Unlike his predecessor, who kept a low profile for decades, Jarvis enjoys press attention and sometimes talks more than he should. In a brief interview with *The New York Times Magazine*, he agreed that

he saw his mission as “dismantling Social Security.” United Seniors’ counsel is another former Reagan official named Curtis J. Herge, whose previous legal clients include a phony Holocaust survivors group and a bogus anti-gambling organization that once fronted for casino mogul Donald Trump—all of which qualified him to represent an organization that maintains the business ethic established by its founder.


In August 2003, the federal government fined United Seniors more than \$500,000 for sending out “misleading” mail designed to look like “some sort of official mailing containing information from the Social Security Administration.” (Until 2002, the directors of USA Next also included the ubiquitous Abramoff.) That penalty was upheld in late August by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. While Jarvis likes to boast that United Seniors has more than a million members, very few of them seem to pay dues, according to the organization’s tax returns. Of the more than \$25 million in revenues reported for 2003, less than \$2 million was attributed to membership dues. In recent years, most of its budget has been subsidized by the pharmaceutical industry, which essentially uses United Seniors to launder support to Republican members of Congress. *The Washington Monthly* reported that during the 2002 midterm elections, United Seniors spent about \$14 million in “unrestricted educational grants” from drug companies on advertising “defending” GOP incumbents for voting in favor of Bush’s Medicare bill.

Not long after the president commenced his privatization campaign, Jarvis launched his latest blitz against AARP. The cause was new, but the rhetoric was tiresomely familiar. United Seniors had attacked AARP many times, invariably accusing the giant nonpartisan group of “liberalism.” The only notable innovation—which attracted immediate media coverage—came when Jarvis announced that he had hired the same political consultants who produced the “Swift Boat” commercials that defamed John Kerry during the 2004 presidential campaign. These character assassins, he vowed, would “dynamite” AARP.


In a demonstration of the firepower they threatened to use, Jarvis posted an ad on the Web site of *The American Spectator* magazine. It insinuated that the utterly mainstream and traditional AARP disdains American soldiers and advocates gay marriage. Few AARP members were likely to believe such sensational lies, but the ad provided a momentary media impact. (It also sparked a lawsuit by the gay married couple whose wedding photo appeared in the ad without their permission.)

Such farcical assaults scarcely rose to the level of harassment; they were more like a flea gnawing at an elephant. But while Jarvis may never peel away a million AARP members to enrich his own organization—as he once vowed—USA Next has already joined the rest of the GOP’s astroturf chorus in praise of grow accounts, “progressive indexing,” and any other scheme that the privatization lobby may devise in the weeks and months ahead.

The privatizers lost round one last spring, but they see this as a 15-round heavyweight bout, and they’re prepared to go the distance. If the McCrery legislation passes the House, the privatizers will claim victory in round two. Progressive groups, far from lulling themselves into the notion that privatization is dead, need to keep the gloves on. **TAP**



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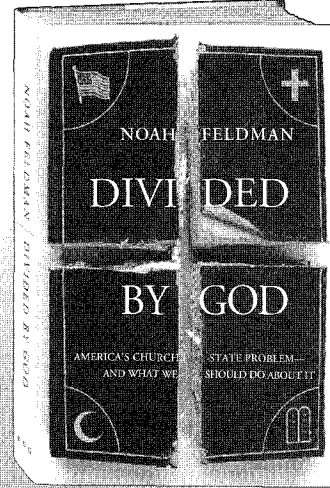
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The Neocon Who Isn't

Francis Fukuyama has all the "right" credentials. So when he opposed the Iraq War and voted for John Kerry, eyebrows were raised. They're still rising.

BY ROBERT S. BOYNTON

ON A SATURDAY IN JANUARY 2003, AS THE IRAQ War approached, the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment convened a meeting in a nondescript building in Arlington, Virginia, with three dozen of Washington's top conservative policy intellectuals. Using an information-gathering technique dating back to the Eisenhower administration, the office asked four groups to study the long-term threat the United States faced from international terrorism and to report back to Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

One of the groups was led by Francis Fukuyama, a professor at Johns Hopkins' School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), best known as the author of *The End of History and the Last Man*, the international bestseller that led British political philosopher John Gray to dub Fukuyama "[the] court philosopher of global capitalism." The relationship between Fukuyama and Wolfowitz went back 35 years, to when Fukuyama was a Cornell undergraduate and Wolfowitz, then a Yale political-science professor, was a board member of the Telluride Association, the elite group house where Fukuyama lived. Fukuyama interned for Wolfowitz while a graduate student in the mid-1970s at the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and later followed his mentor to the State Department during the first Reagan administration. When Wolfowitz became dean of the SAIS, he recruited Fukuyama from George Mason.

When Fukuyama received the Pentagon's call, he immersed himself in subjects—the politics of the Middle East, Islam, terrorism—he hadn't thought about since he'd worked with Dennis Ross on the Palestinian autonomy talks that followed the Camp David accords.

Fukuyama had spent much of the previous summer in Europe promoting *Our Posthuman Future*, his most recent book at the time, and his encounters with editorial boards throughout the continent left an impression on him. "That was the point at which I started to think about the whole issue of American hegemony," he says. "Until then I had accepted the neoconservative line, which is, 'OK, we're hegemon, but we're *benevolent* hegemon.' But when I was in Europe, the reality of what non-Americans thought hit me more forcefully than it had before.

Even the editor of the *Financial Times*, which is a pretty conservative paper, was absolutely livid about the way the Bush administration was dealing with the U.K. and Europe."

Fukuyama's team prepared furiously for three months, and, of the presentations made that January day by the four groups, Fukuyama's was the only one Wolfowitz attended. This was precisely the time when preparations to invade Iraq were in full swing. The news Fukuyama delivered was most likely not what Wolfowitz wanted to hear.

The group's recommendations—which have never been mentioned publicly, much less released—were a photographic negative of the path the Bush administration followed. The United States, the group advised, should avoid overreacting to the events of September 11, and particularly resist military incursions that would "lead to a world in which the U.S. and its policies remain the chief focus of global concern," as Fukuyama put it in *The Washington Post* on the first anniversary of the attacks. The group reasoned that although military action was a necessary component of the American response, it should be of secondary concern to a "hearts and minds" campaign directed at the vast majority of the Islamic world that generally admires America.

It was an analysis that departed from the "clash of civilizations" scenarios that Fukuyama's friend and former teacher Samuel Huntington predicted some years earlier. In contrast, Fukuyama's group portrayed the conflict between democratic capitalism and Islamic fundamentalism as so lopsided that Huntington's formulation overstated the strength of America's foe. "Neither Arab nationalists nor Islamic fundamentalists, or any other alternatives in that part of the world, present a really serious route to modernization," he told the London *Independent* in April 2003.

Given this radical inequality, Fukuyama has argued in subsequent writings (which reflect the ideas that appeared in his group's report) that the United States should avoid inflammatory rhetoric such as the "war on terror." In contrast, Fukuyama argued that while Islamic terrorists are dangerous, they don't resemble anything close to the threat once posed by communism or fascism.

Fukuyama was once a neoconservative's neoconservative, but it would be difficult to classify him thus today. "The Neoconservative Moment," his devastating 2004 *National Interest* article



Middle of the Road?: Fukuyama, seen here in Paris in 2002, opened up a blistering attack on neoconservatives last year.

on Charles Krauthammer, opened the rupture. By November 2004, Fukuyama was alienated enough to have voted for John Kerry. And last month, Fukuyama's new journal, *The American Interest*, which he helped found after breaking with the *National Interest*, debuted. *The American Interest* does not represent a wholesale repudiation of the past; the premier issue did publish the work of stalwart neocons and war supporters (*The Atlantic's* Robert Kaplan, Anne Applebaum of *The Washington Post*). But it also featured Zbigniew Brzezinski and fellow Iraq War apostate Eliot Cohen. Fukuyama's own essay in the volume was a withering critique of Bush administration foreign policy, which, he wrote, has "squandered the overwhelming public support it had received after September 11." And in April he is publishing *After Neoconservatism*, a book drawn from a series of lectures he gave at Yale this past spring in which he again critiqued neoconservative hubris.

It's easy for liberals to read too much into this schism; it's not as if Fukuyama is likely to go rushing into Hillary Clinton's arms anytime soon, much less Russ Feingold's. But what is fair to say is that *The American Interest* represents a new and fascinating sun in the expanding galaxy of opponents of Bush administration policy. In those Yale lectures, Fukuyama also outlined a strategy for rescuing neoconservatism. But it's important to note that his strategy looks less like neoconservatism as we know it today than it resembles a synthesis of neoconservatism, realism, and even liberal internationalism. (Indeed, speaking of Clinton, he is functionally to her left on Iraq.) Is Fukuyama proposing a midcourse correction to neoconservatism, or some-

thing so at odds with neoconservatism as we understand it that it becomes another thing entirely? It's not overstating the case to say that the future of the American foreign-policy debate may hinge, to a considerable extent, on the answer to that question.

IN MAY, WHILE WE SIT IN HIS OFFICE AT HOPKINS, I PRESS Fukuyama to specify the scope of the threat he believes the West faces. True to form, he breaks the problem down into its constituent parts. "Outside of Iraq and Afghanistan," he says, "we are probably at war with no more than a few thousand people around the world who would consider martyring themselves and causing nihilistic damage to the U.S., and probably hundreds of thousands of sympathizers who provide active support, though would not commit violence themselves. Beyond that, you've got lots of people who are potential sympathizers or indifferent on any given day. And there are many who are actually quite sympathetic to the West and America but who just don't like our foreign policy. This struggle is going to look more like a police and intelligence operation than a war, though the stakes could potentially be enormous."

The depths of Fukuyama's apostasy from the Bush doctrine became clear when "The Neoconservative Moment" was published last summer. In it, he accused the movement of having lost its bearings, leading the country into an unnecessary war. He dismantled Bush's Iraq policy piece by piece, condemning it as "utterly unrealistic in its overestimation of U.S. power and our ability to control events around the world." While such sentiments had become commonplace among liberals—

Princeton's John Ikenberry made a similar case in "The End of the Neo-Conservative Movement" in the spring 2004 issue of *Survival*—the fact that someone with Fukuyama's credentials was voicing them was new. "Four years after 9/11, our whole foreign policy seems destined to rise or fall on the outcome of a war only marginally related to the source of what befell us on that day," he wrote in a recent *New York Times* op-ed (extracted from his *American Interest* essay). "There was nothing inevitable about this. There is everything to be regretted about it."

The fact that Fukuyama portrayed the administration as having betrayed the very neoconservative agenda it had claimed to champion must have made his critique especially painful to his erstwhile mentor Wolfowitz. In particular, Fukuyama noted three foreign-policy blunders he predicted would harm the country's prestige for years to come. The administration had launched an ill-conceived social-engineering project ("If the United States cannot eliminate poverty or raise test scores in Washington, D.C., how does it expect to bring democracy to a part of the world that has stubbornly resisted it?"); it had underestimated the importance of using international institutions to help legitimate U.S. foreign policy; and—perhaps most hurtful to the neocons—it had likened the threat of Islamic terrorism to the United States with the threat it posed to Israel, adopting "the Israeli mind-set" regarding the Middle East. "Are we like Israel, locked in a remorseless struggle with a large part of the Arab and Muslim world, with few avenues open to us for dealing with them other than an iron fist?" he asked.

The charges rocked the neoconservative world. Krauthammer accused Fukuyama of anti-Semitism, comparing his ideas to those of Pat Buchanan. "Frank forfeited being 'one of us,'" says Irwin Stelzer, editor of *The Neocon Reader*. "It didn't feel like a debate within the group; it felt like an attack from an outsider." On the other side of the spectrum, of course, Fukuyama's makeover has been greeted favorably. The Center for American Progress' Lawrence Korb believes Fukuyama's break has hurt the neoconservatives' position. "I always quote him when I debate the neocons, and they don't know what to do," Korb says. "They can't dismiss him so easily."

Although some neoconservatives have criticized the war's execution, its justification had remained sacrosanct. "Fukuyama has taken the lead intellectually in moving to the next step of the conservative criticism of the war," says *Rise of the Vulcans* author James Mann. "And in doing so, he has hit a raw nerve. There are a number of internal debates concerning military strategy that have been largely kept from the public. Hawks inside the government have told me that if Iraq fails, there is going to have to be a complete re-examination of America's international-security plans, and that everything will be up for grabs."

"Fukuyama's criticisms," concludes Mann, "only make that more likely."

THE MOST DIVISIVE ASPECT OF FUKUYAMA'S ARGUMENT has been his claim that Islamic terrorism is not an existential threat to the United States. It is a theme that he says has been influenced by the French scholars Gilles Kepel (*The War for Muslim Minds*) and Olivier Roy (*The Failure of Political Islam*), who argue that political Islam has demonstrated itself to be a failure everywhere it has taken power, and that the Islamic terrorist movement had been largely a failure prior to 9-11. Those attacks, as well as the Iraq War, gave it a new lease on life.

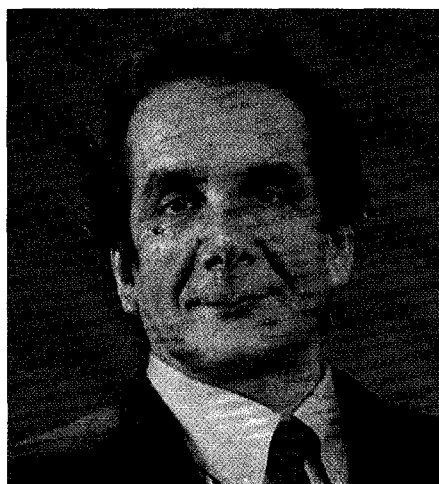
The seeds of these ideas, however, are buried deep in Fukuyama's own work. In his original 1989 *National Interest* article, "The End of History?", he singled out Islam as the only viable theocratic alternative to liberalism and communism, although one he doubted would have "any universal significance." In the preface to *Our Posthuman Future*, he dismissed the threat of Islamic radicalism as "a desperate rearguard action that will in time be overwhelmed by the broader tide of modernization."

Critics have faulted Fukuyama for clinging to his end-of-history thesis, accusing him of systematically underestimating events that challenged it, whether it was Yugoslav nationalism in the '90s or Islamic radicalism today. "Fukuyama's an optimist, which blinds him to a lot," says Paul Berman, the author of *Liberalism and Terror*. (Reviewing "The End of History" in *The New York Review of Books*, Alan Ryan dubbed Fukuyama "the conservative's Dr. Pangloss." "If what we've got is what History with a capital H intends for us," he wrote, "then we, too, live in the best of all possible worlds.")

Krauthammer argues that it's Fukuyama's secular sensibility that blinds him to the appeal of radical Islam. "It has 1 billion potential adherents, which means that [Osama] bin Laden's ideology has the potential to appeal to infinitely more people than the Aryan ideas of Nazism ever did," he told me. "Frank has a stake in denying the obvious nature of the threat, but the fact is that history returned after 9-11 ... There are people running around trying to acquire anthrax with which to wipe out an entire city. If that doesn't qualify as an existential threat, I don't know what does."

Fukuyama replies that these are the kinds of sentiments America should resist. "For the U.S. to treat every Muslim as a potential suicide bomber is precisely what fanatics like bin Laden want," he says. "Iraq before the U.S. invasion was certainly not an existential threat. It posed an existential threat to Kuwait, Iran, and Israel, but it had no means of threatening the continuity of our regime. Al-Qaeda and other radical Islamist groups aspire to be existential threats to American civilization but do not currently have anything like the capacity to actualize their vision. They are extremely dangerous totalitarians, but post threats primarily to regimes in the Middle East."

Korb agrees. "The bombing in London was terrible, but it wasn't like the Blitz," he says. "Terrorists can make life unpleasant, but bin Laden isn't going to end up running Great



"Con" Man: Charles Krauthammer

Britain, while Hitler very well might have.”

The difference between Fukuyama and his critics is as much philosophical as empirical. Whereas Krauthammer and Berman emphasize Islamic terrorism’s potential for imminent violence, Fukuyama takes the long view, reasoning that political Islam won’t win the larger ideological war regardless of how much damage it inflicts. While it might seem that Fukuyama is splitting hairs, he points out that the assumptions we make about the quality of the risk will determine how we respond to it. “In a counterinsurgency war, we are seeking to kill or neutralize a relatively small number of insurgents who are swimming in a much larger sea of less committed people,” he says. “This makes purely military responses to the challenge particularly inappropriate, since counterinsurgency wars are deeply political and dependent on winning hearts and minds from the beginning.”

WITH HIS GRAY SUITS AND MONOGRAMMED SHIRTS, Fukuyama has an understated manner that bears no trace of the missionary zeal one detects in neoconservatives like Krauthammer and William Kristol. Despite the end-of-history albatross he has worn around his neck these past 16 years, Fukuyama has always been a more complex thinker than either his critics or champions have judged him. His “big idea” romanticism about the direction of history was tempered by concerns about modernity’s shortcomings. Most forget that he faced the “end” of history with resignation, not celebration, noting that the post-ideological era would be “a very sad time,” a world in which the absence of a battle over epic ideas would leave us spiritually impoverished, if more politically and economically secure.

The four books that followed *The End of History* were carefully reasoned analyses of, respectively, social capital, bioengineering, neuroscience, and state building—as sober as the first was prophetic. In *Trust* (1995), he limned the informal habits and values that hold societies together. In *The Great Disruption* (1999), he explored evolutionary biology and cognitive neuroscience in order to understand the degree to which human values are hard-wired. In *Our Posthuman Future* (2002), he questioned how the ability of biotechnology to modify behavior might influence liberal democracy. In *State-Building* (2004), he examined why some states fail and others thrive, with the goal of discerning the quality of “stateness” that makes the difference.

The truth is that Fukuyama is a social scientist at heart, an intellectual whose goal is to think through the conditions required for the good society. And it is his intellectual agenda that is the editorial force behind *The American Interest*. Fukuyama is the chairman of the magazine’s editorial board (the editor is former *National Interest* Editor Adam Garfinkel, who arrived fresh from writing speeches for Condoleezza Rice). Its stated mission is to explore the very issues—international institutions, state building, economic development, U.S.–European relations—in which Fukuyama fears neoconservatives have lost interest. “I think of the magazine as a two-way mirror between America and the world,” he tells me. “It is going to be a thoroughly international magazine, with as many

foreign contributions as American. We’re going to analyze America’s behavior on the global stage, and the forces that shape it—not just strategic, but also economic, cultural, and historical.”

One reason Fukuyama’s apostasy resonated beyond neoconservative circles was that the arguments he marshaled—about terrorism, the limits of military power, and America’s relation to the world (to Islam in particular)—reinforced doubts that conservatives of varying degrees had harbored since the war began. Gary Rosen, the managing editor of *Commentary* and the editor of the collection *The Right War? The Conservative Debate on Iraq*, perceives Fukuyama’s critique of neoconservatism as a necessary stage in the creed’s development. “He understands that, in the long run, we’ll need military, political, and financial help from our allies,” Rosen says, “and that a unilateral foreign policy can take us only so far. Neoconservatism has always been a critical outsider’s perspective. He wants to turn it into a practical, long-term program for dealing with the world.”

Bob Boorstin of the Center for American Progress credits Fukuyama with making neoconservatives face the facts about

Fukuyama’s apostasy resonated widely because the arguments he marshaled reinforced doubts conservatives had harbored since the war began.

Iraq. “He’s introduced reality into the equation,” says Boorstin. “Although a lot of these other folks put forward doctrines like democratic realism, the ‘real’ is always missing, which has been the problem with the administration’s Iraq policy since the beginning.” The University of Chicago’s John Mearsheimer, another conservative who jumped ship on Iraq, characterizes Fukuyama as “a prudent Wilsonian” for the caution with which he advocates the spread of democracy.

Kristol brushes aside Fukuyama’s critique as a distraction from what he believes is a larger truth. The days when America was satisfied by détente with a regime like the Soviet Union are over; the Wilsonian project of spreading democracy—whether via military power or diplomacy—is now an integral part of American foreign policy, Kristol says. “It simply isn’t convincing anymore to say that we don’t have to care what happens in far off places like Afghanistan or North Korea. Or, to take the liberal internationalist side, that we are in a post-Cold War era where commerce replaces politics. The realists have lost: What goes on inside other states is important, and everybody now acknowledges that.”

IT’S A GORGEOUS APRIL AFTERNOON IN NEW HAVEN, Connecticut, but a respectable number of students resist the weather’s lure to sit in Sheffield Hall to hear the first of Fukuyama’s three Castle Lectures, which are sponsored by Yale’s Program in Ethics, Politics, and Economics.

Much of his life has been spent on university campuses, including this one, where he studied with Paul de Man for a year before decamping to Harvard’s government department for a doctorate.

An only child, Fukuyama was born in 1952 at the University of Chicago, where his father was studying the sociology of religion. In the fall of 1970, he arrived at Cornell, where he was a "College Scholar," an elite designation for students free to sample courses throughout the university. It was at Cornell that Fukuyama first encountered the work of Leo Strauss, the émigré thinker who is often credited with providing the philosophical underpinnings of neo-conservatism. Fukuyama says he was influenced by Strauss' ideas (he studied Plato's *Republic* with Allan Bloom, himself a student of Strauss), but was never convinced by their dire pronouncements. "In my opinion, neither the crisis of the West nor the crisis of the U.S. was as grave as either Strauss or Bloom believed," he says. "In the end, we had the resources to get through it. Lack of moral certainty is hardly the chief American problem today."

Today, in fact, Fukuyama believes America is more threatened by another of the modern vices Strauss warned against: conformity. Fukuyama remembers reading a book while at Harvard about how groupthink had kept the architects of the Vietnam War from seeing that it was going badly. "I remember thinking, 'That's ridiculous. Nobody would be influenced by other people's opinions to that degree.' But after what has happened in Iraq, I see that it is possible after all," he says.

After a brief introduction by Yale political philosopher Seyla Benhabib, Fukuyama opens the lectures on an uncharacteristically personal note. "I have always regarded myself as a neoconservative," he says, "and have always been proud of wearing that label. I had always thought that I shared a common worldview with many other neoconservatives, including many of my friends and acquaintances who served in the administration of George W. Bush. And yet, unlike most of my fellow neoconservatives, I was never persuaded of the necessity of waging the Iraq War, and I found myself increasingly dismayed as I watched the way that American foreign policy was actually being implemented by the Bush administration."

For Fukuyama, the Castle Lectures are an opportunity to think through the foundations of neoconservatism. He believes its principles are sound and wants to rehabilitate its reputation—though he acknowledges that the word "neoconservative" has become so closely identified with the Iraq debacle that it is beyond rescuing. Among those principles are that the United States should be wary of international law and institutions, that it should care about the internal character of states, that it should formulate a foreign policy that reflects the values of liberal democratic societies, and that it should sometimes use military power as a legitimate vehicle to pursue these goals. To these principles he adds one—skepticism about social engineering—that was at the very foundation of the neoconservative movement that coalesced around *The Public Interest*, the original neoconservative journal founded in 1965 by Irving Kristol and Daniel Bell.

It is in the Bush administration's attempt to restructure Iraqi society and government that Fukuyama perceives a dramatic break with traditional neoconservatism. Drawing on research he did for his most recent book, *State-Building*, Fukuyama reviews the history of America's attempts at creating governments abroad. The fact is, he explains, that nation building seldom works, and when it succeeds, it does so at a very high price. "Of

the 18 nation-building exercises the U.S. has engaged in, only three—Germany, Japan, and South Korea—have been unambiguous successes," he says. "And in each of these, the U.S. had to use huge forces and left them there for decades." Is this, he asks, the future of the U.S. involvement in Iraq?

But the question Fukuyama really wants to answer is how a movement founded to check the ambitious domestic agenda of the Great Society became a manifesto for such an ambitious foreign policy. The answer, he explains, has to do with the way the Cold War ended. The realist school had dominated U.S. foreign policy since the end World War II. Given the fact that the Soviet Union was going to be around forever, argued realists like Henry Kissinger, the United States had to learn how to live with it. Against this school, a minority argued that America should resist the Soviets on moral grounds. The collapse of the Soviet Union vindicated the minority to a degree they never dreamed.

Fukuyama suggests that the lesson some took from the experience was twofold. First, it convinced them that all totalitarian regimes are ultimately hollow. In *After Neoconservatism*, he suggests that neoconservatives have inappropriately universalized the Eastern European experience. Second, it taught them that the more your critics tell you that you are wrong ("the Soviet Union will be around forever," for example), the more likely you are to be correct. "The rapid, unexpected, and largely peaceful collapse of communism validated the concept of regime change as an approach to international relations," he explains. "And yet this extraordinary vindication laid the groundwork for the wrong turn taken by many neoconservatives in the decade following that would have direct consequences for their management of the post-September 11 war on terrorism and the Iraq War."

THE FACT THAT FUKUYAMA TRACES THE IRAQ DEBACLE to the triumphalism that followed the collapse of communism shows just how far he has come in his thinking. After all, his end-of-history thesis was as much a source for as a product of the American exceptionalism and hubris that has foundered in the streets of Baghdad. It isn't as if he has dramatically switched allegiances in the manner of Whittaker Chambers or David Horowitz. What Fukuyama's break (and, more importantly, his new magazine) may signify, however, is that the debate among conservatives on Iraq, on neoconservatism, and on the future direction of American foreign policy will be much more robust—and much more fought out in the open. This wouldn't have happened if Iraq had been a success. Even someone like Fukuyama, who opposed the war from the start, would probably have maintained a discreet silence if the troops had been greeted with flowers and the country weren't on the brink of civil war. But they weren't, and it is. And Fukuyama is one of the few from the neoconservative camp who is openly questioning the principles that led to the war. History, apparently, is not over quite yet. **TAP**

Robert S. Boynton is a professor of journalism at New York University whose work has appeared in The New Yorker, The Atlantic, and The New York Times Magazine. He is the author of The New New Journalism: Conversations With America's Best Non-Fiction Writers on Their Craft.

State of the State

The Israeli left pushed Gaza withdrawal for years. Now, it's happened—and the left is in a shambles. But there may be a way out.

BY JO-ANN MORT

DRIVING ON THE FOUR-LANE HIGHWAY PAST THE cushy American-style Tel Aviv suburb of Ra'anana to the Jewish settlement of Ariel, there's a clear drop in the countryside from green trees to brown, rocky hilltops. This is the "Green Line," the 1967 border. There are no checkpoints to mark contested land because the road was built explicitly for Jewish settlers who live in Ariel and the surrounding settlements to bypass neighboring Arab villages. Ariel is about 14 miles into the heart of the West Bank, surrounded by several smaller settlements, two robust, modern industrial zones (where mostly Palestinians work in the factories), and flourishing illegal outposts that were placed there to thicken the Jewish population between the Green Line and Ariel. Just as in the Gaza settlements that were evacuated this summer, other than the settlers themselves—and Israeli soldiers sent to protect them—few Israelis come here.

When I visited in July with Dror Ettkes, from Peace Now's Settlement Watch (full disclosure: I serve on the board of Americans for Peace Now), we saw a tractor moving along the outskirts of Ariel like a snail, trailed by a security vehicle clearing land in preparation for the boundary that will rise from the rocky earth, cutting off Israel from Palestinian territory. The final line for the barrier is still unclear, but the fact of it is not: At least for the foreseeable future, this could well mark the border between Israel and the Palestinian territories.

The wall is a unilateral step by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, as were the withdrawals from Gaza and four small northern West Bank settlements this summer. And Sharon, the mastermind of the settlement project to shore up territory for Israel beyond the Green Line, is planning more unilateral moves down

the road. Meanwhile, the Israeli left, which for years promoted "land for peace," has been sidelined from the entire process. It won't get a political bounce from the successful dismantling of settlements. This is especially ironic because the peace camp (in Israel left and right usually denote the peace camp and hawks) has been railing against settlements for decades.

How has it happened that the left's most cherished goal has come about, and yet the left is nowhere to be seen? There's no doubt that Israelis are tired of what they call "the situation." Today, a majority of Israelis want a two-state solution and are

willing to give back more even more land. But tired of the Oslo peace process and negotiations, which didn't appear to be yielding any final-status arrangement, they became disgusted by—and fearful of—the violence of the Palestinian intifada. So while they support land for peace, they mostly support separation. Quite simply, their state of mind is dead center, and Sharon has met them where they are. At the same time, the left has neglected to address itself to the growing economic distress of



Border Order: Sharon's unilateral withdrawal was pitch-perfect politics.

many Israelis. This inattention has been tragic for the once-dominant Labor Party, which now finds itself increasingly seen as the party of the elite, with nothing to offer the people. Can Israel's left find a way back? Some of it depends on the left, and much of it depends on Sharon.

IT IS TESTIMONY TO SHARON'S POLITICAL SAVVY—AND THE public's political ennui—that the historically hard-right prime minister has found himself able to shore up support in the wide swath of the political center. As Yossi Alpher, a member of the Council for Peace and Security—a respected group of high-level reserve generals, colonels, and former Shin Bet and

Mossad (Israel's FBI and CIA, respectively) officials, plus an erstwhile Ehud Barak adviser—observed: “Once Sharon, with his tough warrior image, grasped the necessity of unilateral security measures, he could present himself to the public as both the victor in the intifada and the only leader capable of dismantling settlements. No one on the left could—or can—do that.”

Sharon is getting good at this. Time and again, tracking the exhaustion of the Israeli public, Sharon has taken the arguments and proposals of the left and made them his own. The Israeli people, after all, tried to give peace a chance. But they were bitterly disillusioned after the collapse of the Oslo peace process, as well as by Yasir Arafat's shenanigans during his waning years and by four years of suicide bombings inside Israel proper. In fact, Sharon's 2001 victory over the last Labor prime minister, Ehud Barak, followed Arafat's rejection of an agreement proposed by President Clinton in the last days of Clinton's administration. Following those failed negotiations, the intifada began, and the Israeli public mood shifted in response. The Israeli people were tired of the left's claims that there is, in the Palestinians, a “partner for peace,” and they began to think that unilateralism might be the answer.

One unilateral proposal that came from the peace camp as a response to the intifada—and that was co-opted by Sharon—was the separation barrier. It was conceived of in 2002 by the members of the Council for Peace and Security, who are committed to a two-state solution. They saw the barrier as a way to curtail terrorism and to build a border as close as possible to the 1967 Green Line (thereby cutting off the settlements on the other side). Sharon initially resisted this proposal because he realized it would be a political border and would leave many settlements behind. But, pressured by Israelis upset with terrorist attacks inside Israel, Sharon began construction of the barrier—part electrified fence, part 78-foot-high cement wall—midway through the second intifada, in June 2002.

A Gaza-first withdrawal plan, recently adopted by Sharon, was also a strategy embraced by some on the left. Labor Party candidate Amram Mitzna ran on this platform in 2003. Mitzna, however, was also calling for a return to negotiations, and back then, with Arafat still the interlocutor, the voters weren't buying. Sharon trounced Mitzna in that election and pursued withdrawal from Gaza with no intent—and under virtually no pressure from the Israeli public or the Americans—to seek out a negotiating partner in Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Now, with the future of West Bank settlement coming to the fore, extra-parliamentary groups like Peace Now are trying to promote a return to negotiations. But unless the left elects its own prime minister, a unilateral approach is likely to trump serious negotiations.

Meanwhile, the left's old argument against occupation—that it is immoral—has been all but eclipsed by a more reactionary argument for settlement withdrawal based on demographics. The

rapidly growing Palestinian population means that if Israel were not to relinquish more territory, it would have two choices: become a full-fledged apartheid state or give up on the Zionist ideal of a Jewish democratic state with an Arab minority. It's an argument—with broad appeal—that Sharon used to his advantage in implementing the Gaza withdrawal and immediately relieving Israel of responsibility for 1.2 million Palestinians. Even the peace camp has picked up this argument. But making this a core part of the debate complicates matters even further for the left. It immediately cuts off the 20 percent of the Arab sector from voting for anyone on the left who makes this argument. This is especially bad news for the Labor Party, which needs a significant vote from the Arab sector to become a majority party again. According to sociologist Aziz Haidar, editor of the influential Israeli Arab Society Yearbook of the Van Leer Institute in Jerusalem, “Since

1992, the Labor Party got less and less Arab votes. Most of the Arab population today doesn't want to vote, like me. I am not going to vote because it's a competition between parties that never deal with problems of the Arab population.”

The left *has* been effective in extra-parliamentary moves. Early in Sharon's term, Yossi Beilin put forward a document called the Geneva Initiative. Beilin is the figure most identified in Israeli politics with the Oslo Accords and now heads up Meretz, a small party to Labor's left whose support comes from the shrinking kibbutz movement and an educated, secular elite. Beilin's initiative, a shadow final-status agreement with Palestinian co-signers

including a compromise on Jerusalem and more West Bank withdrawal than Sharon wants, garnered 30 percent of public support upon its announcement in December 2003 and continues to enjoy strong international backing. According to several reports in the Israeli papers leading up to the Gaza withdrawal, Sharon's advisers acknowledged that the Geneva Initiative forced his hand. Still, even here Sharon prevailed: By pushing the Gaza evacuation, Sharon was able to co-opt the public's desire and sideline the international community.

WITH ALL HIS REPOSITIONING, THE IRONY IS THAT Sharon enters into anticipated early elections—perhaps sometime after the first of the year—as the most popular Israeli leader in years, *except in his own party*. Israel is not slated to hold the next election until 2007, but an internal Likud meeting in late September will be a referendum on Sharon. If he loses his party's leadership battle, he'll be forced to call new national elections. In Israel, politicians run for office ranked by votes they receive in an internal party primary. The majority of Likud voters are hardcore right wing, and according to early polls, they're angry with Sharon for giving back Gaza and are supporting his rival, former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

That is pushing Sharon to work his political magic, looking



The New Guy: Can Amir Peretz return Labor to glory?

for support from the vast political center. One option for Sharon is to create a party of the center, perhaps along with Shimon Peres, the current Labor Party chief, and Tommy Lapid, the head of the Shinui Party, an anti-clerical, free-market party. This potential group has been dubbed the "Old Men's Party" — (Peres is 82, Sharon, 77, and Lapid, 73). But Sharon clearly may not need the other "old men" to find a middle ground. He may also form a new party of the center on his own and invite Labor to join him. (Given Labor's ineffectiveness, some of the party's longtime supporters are exasperated. In fact, Gidon Levy, one of the most dovish journalists in Israel, wrote in the newspaper *Ha'aretz* that Sharon should simply take over Labor: "Shimon Peres was prime minister twice. Never uprooted even a single plant from a garden of one of the settlements. The withdrawal from Gaza was possible and should have been done long ago, but this only happened under Sharon's leadership. Therefore, the merger of Sharon and Labor is liable to be the correct combination.")

Centrist parties in Israel have a history of imploding upon entry, most recently in 1977 and 1999, when new parties and new alliances were forged to great fanfare, eventually leaving both parties in the dust. But Sharon is slyer than anyone else in Israeli politics today. He could defy the historic odds. Plus, the odd status of the peace process and the breakdown of old ideologies put Israeli politics in flux. There is a realignment waiting to be born. If some variation on centrism rules Israel in this next period, and if the White House continues its hands-off approach, it's likely that the impulse will continue more toward unilateralism than negotiations.

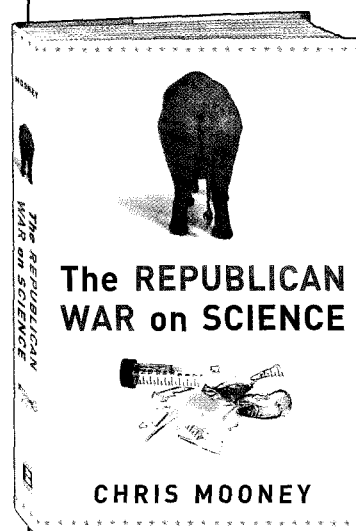
Meanwhile, Sharon isn't waiting for another election. Alpher, the former Barak adviser, predicts that if Sharon is re-elected, he will "present strict security conditions, and when, inevitably, the Palestinians fail to satisfy them, he's most likely to opt for another round of unilateral withdrawals. It is these unique circumstances that enable Sharon, who distrusts peace agreements with Arabs, to be seen at one and the same time to be fighting terrorism and dismantling the settlements he himself built."

If Sharon is able to implement future unilateral moves, they are likely to include consolidation and enhancement of the settlement blocs, including a 47-square-mile area in and around Ariel. The other two encompass the Gush Etzion bloc between Bethlehem and Hebron and the Ma'ale Adumim settlement between Jerusalem and Jericho—where Sharon has already authorized new building. While it's likely that Sharon will evacuate more of the outlying West Bank settlements, there are at least 12,500 new settlers in the West Bank this year, and there's building going on in all the settlement blocs. Additionally, Sharon and Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox mayor already have plans drawn up to settle 35,000 more Jews in greater Jerusalem.

There's one thing that such a centrist alliance wouldn't be able to address in a coherent fashion: economic issues. This is a gaping hole in Israeli politics today, and particularly on the Israeli left, obscured as it has been for decades by the search for peace. And it is here that the Labor party must look for its salvation.

Labor is slated to hold a party primary this fall in preparation for early elections (or those in 2007). Peres, the current leader, could hold on to his chair, but he is old and certainly

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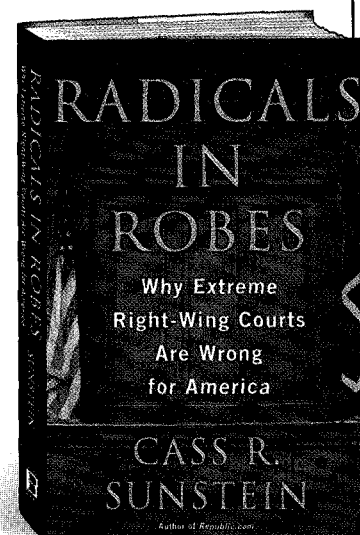


Radicals in Robes

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doesn't represent the future of the party, and he'll no doubt continue to keep Labor in a junior alliance with Sharon. Though younger, former Prime Minister Barak tried to make a comeback this past summer and failed from lack of popular support.

But there's a potential wild card in the Labor race who could infuse new energy into both Labor and a national campaign: Amir Peretz, the leader of Israel's Histadrut trade-union federation, who could also force new elections by pulling Labor out of the government, as he's said he'd do. Peretz offers the possibility of a revival largely because he—neither a former general nor a supporter of neoliberal economic policies—is finally turning his party's attention to the economic concerns that both parties in Israel have long ignored as they addressed the priority of peace.

AN ODDITY OF LEFT-RIGHT POLITICS IN ISRAEL IS THAT the economic elites vote left, while the working class votes to the right. Ever since the vast immigration of Jews from North Africa in the 1950s—mostly Moroccan—Labor and its junior ally, the more left-wing Meretz Party, have been seen as anti-Sephardic, or discriminatory toward Jews from Arab countries. It's these Jews who form the working class. This has created all sorts of pluses and minuses for the peace camp through the years. On the plus side, an elite base helps with fund raising for peace initiatives. In fact, some of the very same business leaders who for years supported anti-Sharon peace rallies have answered his request to financially back the unilateral Gaza move.

But the peace camp hasn't done the hard work necessary to bring the working-class and poorer sectors with them. Actually, it's done quite the opposite. For as long as he's been dreaming of peace, Peres, the perennial Labor leader, has heralded peace's potential for regional free-trade zones and the like. But right now, Israeli poverty is on the rise, and the middle class feels increasingly squeezed. Israel's National Insurance Institute reported this summer that 30 percent of Israelis are living below the poverty line. Voters want peace dividends in their communities, not speculative promises about regional economic integration. Even though the right promotes the very policies that brought the poverty, it uses fiery rhetoric and stokes decades of resentment, which keep the poorer sectors voting for its candidates (not unlike the Republican Party poaching working-class support from the Democrats).

Labor needs to mobilize on this front. In 2000, the party moved its offices from the high-rent district of central Tel Aviv to the forlorn Hatikva neighborhood. At the time, the move was trumpeted as Labor's return to the masses, but in fact the move occurred because the party's coffers were barren and the cheaper Hatikva quarter made financial sense. Whether it makes political sense, long term, depends on much more than the symbolism of a party office. It depends on Labor expanding its umbrella over the large number of Israelis who gave up on it long ago.

That's where Peretz, who has always supported the peace camp, comes in. "I am a peace person, and I fully support the establishment of a Palestinian state," he told me this summer. "But in Israel, if you ask someone if they are left or right, they will tell you about Mahmoud Abbas or Arafat, not about single mothers." To drive home his point, he created a campaign document called

"An Ethical Road Map for Israel," which argues for the "establishment of a Palestinian state ... [that will allow Israel to channel] resources inwardly: caring for our own citizens, meeting their needs, closing social gaps, and enhancing social justice."

In mid-July, I visited the Labor Party compound to attend a Peretz rally. The participants seemed like a combined convention of the union-building trades and a rainbow coalition with a smattering of New York City Upper West Side intellectuals—exactly the coalition that Peretz hopes to ride to victory. Bulky union chiefs sat between elegantly robed Druze leaders from the Northern Galilee and Russian Ph.D.s who left academic jobs in Russia only to be hired as taxi drivers in Israel. All of them listened as university student leaders and professors alike praised Peretz. Born in Morocco, he took to the podium with a force befitting a soapbox orator, telling the crowd, "If the agenda will be disengagement, Likud will win; but if the agenda will also be social, we will win." (The rally was called on the same day that the Likud Party introduced a bill clearly aimed at stopping Peretz's rise to power. It stipulates that the head of the Histadrut can't also serve in the Knesset. A Meretz legislator told me that he was called by Peres to lobby for its passage and against Peretz.)

Whether Peretz is ultimately Labor's candidate or not, he is pointing toward a direction that could lead Labor out of its wilderness. A new generation of nonmilitary leaders with a vision of peace and social solidarity needs to emerge and take charge. Peretz is one. Another is Ofir Pines-Paz, the 43-year-old popular labor minister of the interior who publicly criticized the 2005 government budget and reached out to the Arab population. Paz, who is considered future prime-minister material, told me, "I think that generals understand conflicts, but that Israel needs those who are professionals in security and defense and understand civil needs."

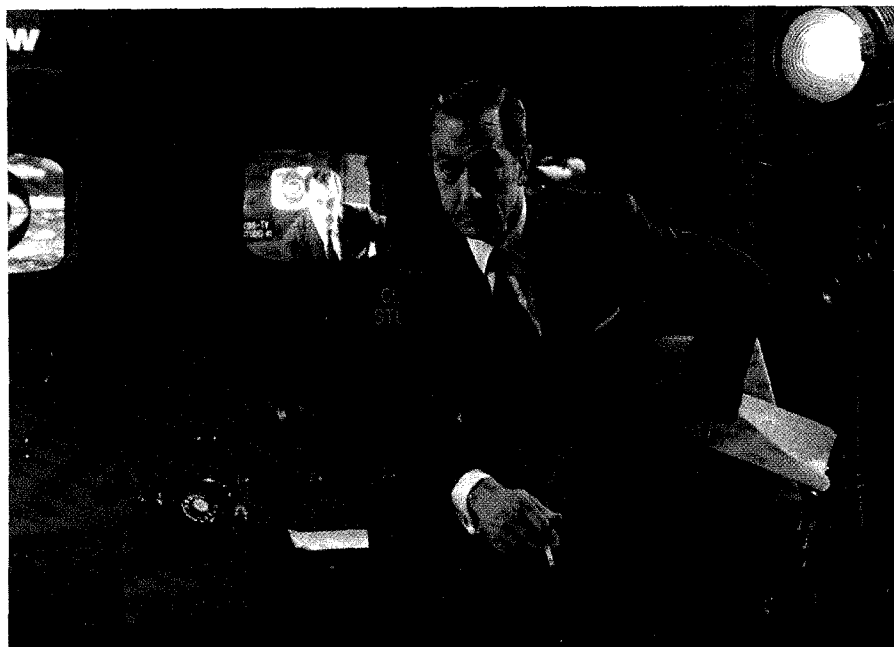
As long as Israel's existence was threatened, no one could think about social and economic issues. But that moment is gone. Even without a final agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, Israel's secure existence is a fact. The public now wants to address other issues even while figuring out how to separate from the Palestinians, and the left has failed to dominate in the transition to peace.

Still, the left could get a pass if Netanyahu wins as head of the Likud, because he's such a right-wing lightning rod. Any Labor Party leader would gain support by the silent majority against Netanyahu, who's disliked—and mistrusted—by most Israelis. Even the business leaders who hailed his deregulation and liberalization program worry about him at the helm of government. With Netanyahu as head of the Likud list, Sharon would be forced not only into the dead center but perhaps further to the left than he ever envisioned, and could also lead disillusioned and Labor voters to turn out to vote for the tattered party once again. But whether it's through the Labor Party or something new, the Israeli left, composed of a shrinking base among the elites, needs to promote an alternative social and economic vision for the future. Otherwise, it will fade away for good. **TAP**

*Jo-Ann Mort writes frequently about Israel and is co-author of *Our Hearts Invented A Place: Can Kibbutzim Survive in Today's Israel?**

Culture & Books

"Taking on a major topic in each chapter, Hodgson eschews sweep in favor of a kind of sociological meditation."
—PAGE 45



Smoking Him Out: David Strathairn as Murrow in *Good Night, and Good Luck*

FILM

SEE IT AGAIN

Is George Clooney a serious filmmaker? He's made a stark, perfectly focused film on Edward R. Murrow's war with Joe McCarthy. So, yes.

BY J. HOBERMAN

THE IRRESISTIBLE FORCE OF AMERICA's post-World War II Red Scare first slammed into the immovable object of network television in September 1953, when the House Un-American Activities Committee revealed that TV's biggest star had registered to vote in the 1936 election as a Communist. The red-head was a Red.

For the next week, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz—or, rather, Lucy and Desi, as neither broke character throughout the crisis—spun like dervishes, giving interviews and working their fans. Careers had been smashed for far less, but ulti-

mately Lucy's flaming past only made sense as one more domestic mishap—she had, she explained, just been trying to please another character, her wacky “socialist” grandpa. The sponsor held fast, and so did CBS. Thus did TV assert itself as the narrative engine of American public life. Next, the emboldened medium would expose and topple the most fearsome Communist-hunter of all, America's grand inquisitor and witch-finder general, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, Republican of Wisconsin.

The particulars of that exposure are the subject of George Clooney's *Good*

Night, and Good Luck. A classy docu-drama shot in crisp black and white, Clooney's movie takes its title from CBS newsman Edward R. Murrow's trademark sign-off, and, with admirable restraint, restages the multi-round 1953–54 televised prizefight in which the urbane journalist vanquished the roughneck demagogue—or, rather, set him up for the televised act of self-destruction that was the Army-McCarthy hearings.

Having achieved media stardom in the early 1950 aftermath of Alger Hiss' perjury conviction, the Wisconsin senator thrived throughout the Korean War and never seemed more formidable than after the 1952 Republican landslide. The real key to the election was General Dwight Eisenhower's popularity, but, as always with McCarthy, perception trumped reality. A master of political symbolism, he had cast himself as the two-fisted hero in a cosmic drama, and much of the American public was enthralled.

As the Republicans now controlled the Senate, McCarthy became chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which he ran as a one-man show. (Only a few weeks after he assumed his chairmanship, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* opened on Broadway, providing a readymade metaphor for what was happening in Washington.) Targeting the State Department, McCarthy called investigations at will, wreaking havoc but uncovering little. During the summer of 1953, he announced plans to subpoena former President Harry Truman, held a one-day hearing on a conspiracy to assassinate ... himself, and variously threatened to probe the Atomic Energy Commission, the CIA, and the Pentagon. As the year waned, he finally discovered that a left-wing Army dentist named Irving Peress had been promoted to major—the armed forces were rife with communist subversion!

A January 1954 Gallup Poll gave McCarthy a 50-percent favorable rating. Then, on Tuesday evening, March 9, 1954, CBS broadcast *See It Now's* "A Report on Senator Joseph R. McCarthy." And everything changed. Did TV really bring down McCarthy? As noted by historian Thomas Doherty in *Cold War, Cool Medium*, "Murrow was neither the first nor did he risk the most in challenging McCarthyism." More than a few newspapermen, editorial cartoonists, and radio commentators had already attacked the senator; *The New York Times*, the *New York Herald-Tribune*, the *Washington Post*, and even *Time* magazine were hostile to McCarthy. Indeed, the very day of Murrow's report, Senator Ralph Flanders, Republican of Vermont, had ridiculed McCarthy's investigation: "He dons his war paint. He

first *See It Now* treatment of McCarthy (or his -ism) will report an egregious case of guilt by association: Air Force Reserve officer Milo Radulovich has been labeled a "security risk" and asked to resign his commission because he continues to maintain contact with his immigrant father, a reader of allegedly "subversive newspapers."

Nervous CBS declined to promote the telecast, so Murrow and Friendly paid for a *New York Times* ad themselves. But, as with Lucy, human interest and family values—amplified by television—trumped the communist threat. Although the Pentagon initially challenged the story as "without merit," it was only a matter of time before the secretary of the Air Force appeared on *See It Now* to announce that the young lieutenant had been exonerated.

eloquent expression of Cold War liberalism prior to John F. Kennedy's inaugural speech, directly into the camera.

Murrow's report on McCarthy was well received, and, documenting testimony given in the following days, *See It Now* pushed its advantage. "Annie Lee Moss Before the McCarthy Committee," telecast the following week, presented the dramatic high point of McCarthy's current investigation into a middle-aged African American code clerk fired by the Pentagon for her alleged Communist Party affiliations. Moss proved the most sympathetic—or perhaps just the most pathetic—of victims. "No one who heard [this poor, utterly nonpolitical woman] could doubt her honesty," I.F. Stone wrote at the time. "Wazzat?" she cried when [Senator Stuart Symington] asked her if she had ever read Karl Marx." (Moss' performance is all the more fascinating in that she most likely was a party member brilliantly feigning befuddlement to bamboozle the subcommittee.)

Featuring a telegenic character comparable to Milo Radulovich's father, who had memorably called upon President Eisenhower in broken English to reinstate his boy, "Annie Lee Moss" received even better press notices than the McCarthy report. On April 6, *See It Now* telecast McCarthy's response. Glaring into the camera, the senator sonorously denounced Murrow as "the leader and the cleverest of the jackal pack which is always found at the throat of anyone who dares to expose Communists or traitors." In the movie, as in life, no comment needs to be made. McCarthy is practically booing himself.

When someone bursts into the newsroom, shouting, "The Senate is investigating McCarthy!" Strathairn's Murrow permits himself a single smile. But then the bad news: His colleague Don Hollenbeck (Ray Wise), host of *CBS Views the Press*, ill and harassed by a red-baiting Hearst TV critic, has committed suicide. (Hollenbeck's death actually occurred a few months later.) The following week, the Army-McCarthy hearings began, and McCarthy was history. To see it, rent the 1964 documentary by Emile de Antonio, *Point of Order*.

As filmmaking, Good Night, and Good Luck is strikingly ascetic. Clooney's Murrow seemingly has no life other than his television productions.

goes into his war dance. He emits his war whoops. He goes forth to battle and proudly returns with the scalp of a pink Army dentist."

Flanders' remarks brought immediate congratulation from President Eisenhower—but Eisenhower did not present himself as McCarthy's antagonist. That role was assumed by Murrow, a familiar face and voice—even something of a war hero, remembered for his live broadcasts during the London Blitz—who would bring McCarthy into America's living rooms.

GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK PICKS up the McCarthy saga some months before the famous broadcast, in October 1953, with the CBS news staff discussing the network loyalty oath that even Murrow signed. (In one of its few historical lapses, the movie implies that this oath—implemented nearly three years earlier—is a recent development.) Murrow (David Strathairn) and his producer, Fred Friendly (Clooney), are planning their anti-McCarthy strategy. The

According to Doherty, Murrow and Friendly had their McCarthy report prepared and were only waiting for an opportune airdate. And in early 1954, McCarthy provided that when he told General Ralph W. Zicker, whom he had been badgering regarding the Peress promotion, that he was "not fit to wear [his] uniform." In *Good Night, and Good Luck*, the impetus comes from the staff's desire to protect Murrow: "We've got to hit McCarthy before they go after Ed."

Good Night, and Good Luck recreates much of the March 9 show, which was itself an exercise in intellectual montage, largely devoted to showcasing McCarthy's interrogation of bewildered witnesses. But the movie is hardly a straightforward reconstruction. Rather than digitally Gump-ing Strathairn into the televised '50s, Clooney rigorously juxtaposes (and, in effect, annotates) the actual McCarthy with Strathairn's cannily understated performance. Bertolt Brecht would have approved: Strathairn doesn't impersonate Murrow, he quotes him—delivering Murrow's famous closer, arguably the most

AS FILMMAKING, *GOOD NIGHT, AND Good Luck* is strikingly ascetic. Clooney's Murrow seemingly has no life other than his television productions. He is perfectly focused—and so is the movie. *Good Night, and Good Luck* may be a bit didactic and a tad schematic (after every crucial scene, the CBS newsroom retires en masse to a neighborhood boîte to drink in chanteuse Dianne Reeves). But it is also surprisingly serious.

Or maybe not so surprising: An outspoken liberal who used an interview with Charlie Rose to compare the Bush family to the Sopranos, Clooney has shown himself to be a filmmaker whose main interest is political drama. He co-produced the short-lived Washington quasi-reality series *K Street* and the live telecast of *Fail-Safe*; his first movie, *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*, dramatized *Gong Show* host Chuck Barris' fantastic assertions that he had really been an undercover CIA hit man—giddier, but not altogether unrelated to *Good Night, and Good Luck* in its portrayal of tele-heroics.

Good Night, and Good Luck celebrates the fraternity of the newsroom and burns

much tobacco on the altar of Murrow's cult. It is not, however, a self-congratulatory celebration of television. The movie is framed by a 1958 testimonial dinner in which Murrow delivers a stern jeremiad on the medium; it reaches its climax when the triumphant newsman is called on the carpet by CBS Chairman William Paley (Frank Langella at his chilliest). Murrow's reward for demolishing McCarthy is, in essence, a demotion. Paley informs his star reporter that he will be doing fewer episodes of *See It Now*, which is also to be buried in an obscure time slot, and more of the prime-time celebrity journalism practiced in his other show, *Person to Person*.

The lesson has scarcely dated. Murrow bested McCarthy in good measure because personality trumps information in the ongoing miniseries of American public life. Thanks to television, it still does. **TAP**

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to getting both our domestic and foreign policies right in the future.

At the heart of Prestowitz's analysis lies the fact that the world's labor force has effectively more than doubled over the past 15 years as a result of the entrance of China, India, and the former Soviet Union into the global system of production and trade. Most of these workers are unskilled and have brought little capital with them. So labor, especially unskilled labor, has become relatively more abundant, and capital has become relatively more scarce. Indeed, the ratio of global capital to global labor has fallen by nearly half in just a few years—an event without historical precedent. Because this ratio determines the relative returns to capital and to labor, its precipitous drop partly explains recent trends in the United States such as rising profits as a share of national income and the failure of real wages to match the growth in productivity.

Overall, the doubling of the global labor force will put downward pressure on the wages and employment levels of American workers for years to come. Initially this pressure will be greatest for unskilled workers, who have already suffered relative and absolute declines in their earnings as a result of both imports and immigration during the last quarter-century. And as China and India improve the skills of their workers, even many skilled and highly educated Americans will find themselves competing with foreigners who are equally productive but willing to work for lower pay.

Prestowitz is surely right in his conclusion that the entry of low-cost Asian workers into world markets will cause painful job dislocation and stagnant—or even falling—real wages for many Americans. But the future may not be as dire as he suggests, for three reasons posited by Martin Wolf in his optimistic book on globalization.

First, most jobs in the United States are in the service sector, and most services are still produced and consumed locally. The McKinsey Global Institute estimates that only about 11 percent of the 1.46 billion service jobs worldwide could be per-

BOOKS

AN ECONOMIC TSUNAMI

THREE BILLION NEW CAPITALISTS: THE GREAT SHIFT OF WEALTH AND POWER TO THE EAST BY CLYDE PRESTOWITZ Basic Books, 278 pages, \$26.95

GLOBALIZATION: WHY IT WORKS BY MARTIN WOLF Yale University Press, 398 pages, \$30.00

BY LAURA D'ANDREA TYSON

WILL THE UNITED STATES benefit from the new wave of globalization sweeping the economy, as it did from earlier ones? Or will America instead see its prosperity and economic power slip away as jobs, technology, income, and wealth shift to Asia?

In his new book, Clyde Prestowitz argues that there is a new and threatening dynamic at work with the rapid emergence of China and India as major forces in world markets just at the moment when communications and transportation technologies allow for the rapid

movement of production across national borders. And Prestowitz is not optimistic about the outcome—unless policy-makers embrace a major new agenda to enhance America's competitiveness and to counter the onslaught of new low-cost Asian producers.

Prestowitz's analysis taps into widespread anxieties about the rise of China and India that are hardly irrational. But the picture is complicated, and the United States may end up benefiting more than it loses. Understanding how China and India affect American interests is crucial

formed abroad in the foreseeable future.

Second, capital—defined as including social and human assets—is not nearly as mobile across borders as many of Prestowitz's alarming examples suggest. Social capital includes relationships of personal trust and cooperation; human capital includes education and language skills. Many workers in the United States who possess these advantages will continue to enjoy a substantial edge in productivity and wages over their foreign counterparts—and an even greater number will be able to do so if the United States upgrades education and worker training and increases its investment in research and development, as Prestowitz recommends.

Third, there are still very few truly multinational American companies that

prices. If this ratio rises and the U.S. terms of trade improve as Asia's share of global markets increases, America will be better off because it will be able to buy more from the rest of the world with what it produces at home. Unfortunately, it is difficult to predict how Asia's growing role in the world economy will affect America's terms of trade. As China has displaced other higher-cost sources of labor-intensive goods such as South Korea and Hong Kong, it has driven down the relative prices of the manufactured goods it exports. That has had a positive effect on the U.S. terms of trade: Labor-intensive manufactured goods imported into the United States have become cheaper relative to capital-intensive, technology-intensive manufactured goods that the United States

dramatic deterioration in America's terms of trade would have a modest negative effect on American's aggregate economic welfare given the relatively small role of imports and exports in the overall American economy. And the positive effects of innovation produced in India and China, or triggered by competition from them, could more than offset any adverse terms of trade.

Prestowitz believes that America's relative economic superiority is eroding rapidly as a result of the rise of China and India. In the face of these challenges, he asserts that the first priority of America's leaders—even more important in his view than fighting terrorism or spreading liberty—should be to ensure America's long-term competitiveness, and he proposes a comprehensive policy agenda with that aim. The agenda includes the introduction of a value-added or consumption tax to increase national savings, a national health-insurance plan, a portable pension system, and a comprehensive energy policy. He also argues strongly for new investments to upgrade education at all levels and to bolster research and development in order to create more high-productivity jobs to replace the ones moving to lower-cost Asian workers. And he suggests a more generous and comprehensive wage-insurance system to help individual workers who are displaced as a result of foreign competition.

A strong case can be made for Prestowitz's domestic economic agenda even if his concerns about the rise of Asia prove to be unwarranted. When he talks about American competitiveness, he often means America's ability to raise living standards, which depends in turn on America's ability to sustain strong productivity growth, regardless of what other nations are doing. Even if the rise of Asia means a relative decline in America's share of some key global industries, America's standard of living will continue to grow as long as its productivity does. And most of the domestic policies recommended by Prestowitz would boost productivity.

Prestowitz's recommendations on foreign economic policy are less convincing.

The doubling of the global labor force will put downward pressure on the wages and employment levels of American workers for years to come.

can integrate their production around the globe, and even those that do continue to locate more than three-quarters of their production, employment, and capital spending in the United States. That fraction has not changed during the past decade of rapid globalization. Prestowitz's cases focus on American companies moving production from high-cost U.S. locations to low-cost sites in Asia. But this evidence is misleading: A job created abroad does not necessarily mean a job lost at home. Between 1991 and 2001, American multinationals added 5.5 million jobs at home, or about five jobs in the United States for every three jobs they added overseas.

Even if the entry of billions of new Chinese and Indians into global labor markets harms a significant fraction of American workers, does that mean America's overall economic well-being will suffer? The answer to this question is not nearly as simple or as certain as Prestowitz's analysis suggests.

A key issue is how Asia's rise will affect America's terms of trade, that is, the ratio of its export prices to its import

exports. In recent years, however, China's rapid economic growth has also pushed up world prices for oil and other raw materials—and that, as we can all now see at the gas pump, adversely affects the United States. So China's net effect on the American economy has become more difficult to assess, although most economists believe it has been positive to date.

But the next chapter in this saga could be worse. As China and India become more significant producers and exporters of technology-intensive, capital-intensive products on global markets, the result could be to drive down the price the United States can get for its exports relative to the prices it pays for imported raw materials. Consequently, as the economist Paul Samuelson recently cautioned, the emergence of large-country, low-cost competitors such as China and India in U.S. export markets could adversely affect America's terms of trade and its overall economic welfare.

Nonetheless, such proponents of globalization as Wolf and Jagdish Bhagwati are quick to point out that even a

He argues that the United States should work to reduce the role of the dollar as a reserve currency without demonstrating that this role has harmed, or will harm, the U.S. economy. He argues that the North American Free Trade Agreement should be extended to include the rest of Latin America and Japan, and that it should be turned into an economic and political union along the lines of the European Union, without explaining how this would help the United States address the competitive threat posed by China and India. He even suggests that the United States should negotiate a free-trade agreement with India. It is hard to see the link between any of these policy recommendations and the analysis of most of his book.

Although Prestowitz sees the rise of China and India as an economic challenge, it is also an opportunity. The entry of Chinese and Indian workers into global markets may cost American workers bargaining power and income, but the economic development of China and India

will also bolster global demand and growth and create new jobs in the United States and around the world.

Geopolitical power may be a zero-sum game—the more one nation gains, the more another loses. But the global economy is not zero-sum. Even if the rise of China and India means that America's share of the global economy declines, America's prosperity and living standards can continue to grow provided America's leaders pursue the right policies. Ultimately, the nation's competitiveness depends not on what other nations do but on what we do at home. Prestowitz is deeply concerned that our leaders are not doing the right things. I agree with him. His book makes compelling and sobering reading. **TAP**

Laura D'Andrea Tyson, chair of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Clinton, is a professor of economics and business administration at the University of California, Berkeley's Haas School of Business.

BOOKS

ONLY YESTERDAY

MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS: AMERICA FROM NIXON TO THE NEW CENTURY BY GODFREY HODGSON Princeton University Press, 379 pages, \$29.95

RESTLESS GIANT: THE UNITED STATES FROM WATERGATE TO BUSH V. GORE BY JAMES T. PATTERSON Oxford University Press, 448 pages, \$35.00

BY DAVID GREENBERG

ANYONE WISHING TO UNDERSTAND the United States in the three decades after World War II would do well to start with two books: *America in Our Time: From World War II to Nixon—What Happened and Why* (1976), by the veteran British journalist Godfrey Hodgson, and *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945–1974* (1996), by the historian James T. Patterson of Brown University. Both authors have now written sequels taking the story up to 2000, and the two pairs of books help to make sense not only of America's recent past but also of what continues to trouble us.

Though not at odds with each other, the earlier two books are quite different. Hodgson, a longtime observer of the American scene, broke ground 30 years ago by offering a compelling account of the turbulent changes that rattled the United States in the 1960s. The main argument of *America in Our Time*—that a “liberal consensus,” having taken hold in the war's aftermath, unraveled in the late 1960s amid strife over civil rights, the Great Society, and the Vietnam War—remains powerfully influential and largely unchallenged. Less original in its interpretations but more comprehensive in its scope, Patter-

son's 829-page *Grand Expectations* was rightly hailed upon its publication as a masterwork of synthesis. Patterson, who seemed to have read everything on America from World War II to Watergate, deftly interwove social and political developments in a narrative whose tone was as confident as its prose was crisp. The book won the Bancroft Prize.

Hodgson's new book, *More Equal Than Others*, is, if anything, more impressionistic and essayistic than his first volume, and certainly more so than both of Patterson's. The Orwellian title conveys Hodgson's critical view of American society. Taking on a major topic in each chapter—technology, immigrants, women, and so on—Hodgson eschews sweep in favor of a kind of sociological meditation.

In contrast, Patterson's *Restless Giant* follows *Grand Expectations* and other volumes in the indispensable Oxford History of the United States series (including James McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* and David M. Kennedy's *Freedom From Fear*) in aspiring to something close to definitiveness. Weighing in at a mere 448 pages, *Restless Giant* doesn't quite match the awesome breadth of Patterson's first book. But perhaps because this time around he couldn't follow trails beaten by pioneering forerunners, Patterson seems to have been more adventuresome himself in mapping the historical landscape. Dazzling and erudite, the book thrums with the buzz of ideas coming together.

Reading the two accounts together drives home the immense difficulty of imposing thematic and narrative unity on 25 sprawling years of politics, economics, culture, social mores, technological progress, race relations, gender dynamics, and demographic change—especially in a vast, diverse nation. What's more, chroniclers of the recent past also have to cope with a problem akin to a cinematographer's challenge of focusing on subjects in both the foreground and background of a frame. To explain the Iranian hostage crisis or women's liberation requires different skills—perhaps a different mode of writing—from the kind needed to put in perspective the impeachment of Bill Clinton, which is still widely viewed

through partisan lenses, or the 1990s rush to economic globalization, the implications of which remain as unclear as ever.

In crafting their tales, the authors inevitably make some similar choices. Besides spanning almost identical periods—with the early 1970s nadir of Watergate, Vietnam, and stagflation providing a natural starting point—their books also sound common themes. As the earlier volumes recounted liberalism's postwar ascent, so these focus on conservatism's ensuing rise: the cultural backlash, the tax revolt, Ronald Reagan, resurgent evangelicalism, the 1994 Republican takeover of Congress. And where the earlier books limned mounting disillusionment and fracturing social norms, their sequels tell a more surprising tale of what Hodgson calls "the revival of national confidence" under Reagan and especially Clinton—though both authors, particularly Hodgson, also stress the lingering frustrations and dashed promises behind the veneer of regeneration.

Notably, both of these volumes give lesser prominence to the Cold War, perhaps because hindsight has revealed that the Soviet Union was moribund by 1975. More disappointingly, both largely omit literary and cultural developments, except to illustrate social trends such as the increasing visibility of sex. More interesting than the predictable resemblances of these accounts are their striking differences. Discrepancies in emphasis, style, and especially argument underscore that contrary to our intuition, writing history is not a passive feat of discovering meaning but a purposeful act of creating it. With an inescapably subjective lens, a historian must aggressively gather and select data, fashion a narrative, and wrestle with the material until it coheres as a piece of writing that is literary, cogent, and, of course, accurate.

Hence, two different approaches to mastering the recent past emerge in these books. Detached, dispassionate, and drawn to detail, Patterson writes in taut, vivid language, and with illustrative examples on every page. He keeps his judgments terse and defensible. More overtly opinionated, Hodgson tends toward spec-

ulative generalizations and quirky insights; at times he waxes repetitive, rambling, and random in his choice of information to include.

Above all, the two historians offer starkly divergent assessments of the state of affairs in late-20th-century America. Generally bleak, Hodgson fastens upon the unheralded persistence of inequality in American life—of wages, income, and wealth. For all the talk of economic revival under Reagan and again under Clinton, Hodgson notes, real wages in 1999 remained 10 percent lower than they were in 1973. Meanwhile, "the average CEO earned a remarkable 107 times more than the average worker, double the ratio in 1989 and five times that in 1962."

Armed with such statistics, Hodgson rejects Clinton's widely endorsed claim in January 2000 that the United States had never before enjoyed "so much prosperity and social progress with so little internal crisis and so few external threats." Downplaying the supposed wonders of the information-age economy and attendant bull market, Hodgson instead proffers sober reminders that, since 1975, "the corporate class ... has strengthened its grip on society," that anomic suburbs have displaced vital cities as "the typical American habitat," and that the promises of equality made to women, blacks, and immigrants remain unfulfilled. He provocatively ties these developments to the triumph of conservatism, noting, "The crucial change was the discrediting of government."

Patterson, though no Pollyanna or celebrant of unrestrained capitalism, might well group Hodgson among the theorists of American decline whose dour critiques, he notes, recurred like clockwork throughout the last 25 years. From meditations in the 1970s about "an age of limits" to angry screeds in the 1980s "culture wars" to recent laments about rifts between red- and blue-state worldviews, our era has never lacked for jeremiads. Indeed, the enduring fear of the deterioration of American life, even in good times, constitutes one of Patterson's major and more original themes.

While granting the accuracy of some of these critiques—Patterson dwells in-

telligently not only on the widening gap between rich and poor but also on such intractable problems as the urban crisis and the sorry state of public schools—he more often accentuates the positive. "This is not primarily a tale of Limits, Decline, or Conflict," he writes, "for after the doldrums of the mid- and late 1970s, a number of more positive developments ... helped to raise popular hopes. Many social and cultural conflicts, loudly contested by partisan political antagonists and given exaggerated play in the media, turned out to be neither so profound nor so implacable as they seemed." Later, he quotes approvingly the political scientist James Q. Wilson from 1995: "Today most of us have not merely the hope but enjoy the reality of a degree of comfort, freedom, and peace unparalleled in human history. And we can't stop complaining about it."

Fueling this unprecedented—and unappreciated—growth of personal autonomy, Patterson suggests, has been the revolutionary expansion of rights that he identifies as another hallmark of the age. As in *Grand Expectations*, he steers attention to the (fitfully) expanding opportunities for women and minorities, the (controversial) relaxation of puritanical social codes about sex, and the newfound (if limited) toleration of once-taboo lifestyles. Noting as well the real gains that most Americans achieved in the 1990s—rising incomes, improved medical care, a cleaner environment, finer comforts and conveniences, as well as diminished crime, homelessness, and welfare dependency—Patterson concludes that the conservative capture of political power neither drastically rolled back progressive gains nor stanching what he calls "the long-range liberalization of American cultural attitudes that had advanced, especially since the 1960s."

Even while noting this bounty of material goods and personal liberty, Patterson describes at length (and without partisan editorializing) the fierce political wars of the century's final years. Quickly but thoroughly he reviews the Clinton impeachment and George W. Bush's successful bid in 2000 to short-

circuit the recount of Florida's presidential votes that probably would have shown Al Gore to be the election's rightful winner. While evenhandedly reporting both sides' arguments, Patterson still manages to convey a sense of the opportunism behind these efforts. And though not untroubled by their grubbiness, he minimizes their import. He observes optimistically that Americans rapidly shifted their attention to more mundane matters once these suspenseful dramas ended.

Presented with authority and abundant evidence, Patterson's sanguine diagnosis of the American condition provides some reassurance at a time when political ill will remains acute and public discourse seems alternately shrill and inane. Yet given the worsening acrimony of recent years and the increasingly naked exercise of power by the right, any socially concerned citizen must feel tempted at some level to resist this analysis. After all, *Restless Giant* concludes on the verge of the new mil-

lennium, before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. (Wisely, Patterson, like Hodgson, judged that ordeal to be too recent and traumatic to analyze historically—and perhaps also to be more properly seen as commencing a new era whose events are only now unfolding.) Widely ramifying at home as well as abroad, those attacks appear to have altered the character of American political life from what it was at the end of Patterson's and Hodgson's accounts.

The renewal of an angry and bullying jingoism, the polarizing misadventure in Iraq, the swelling arrogance of Fox News and the Christian right, the blithe acceptance of Bush's no-holds-barred politics—these developments, though surely of a piece with those that Patterson describes in his book's last chapters, seem to go beyond even the moral posturing of the Clinton impeachment and Bush's Florida power grab and indicate real peril for America's abiding liberal spirit. Ultimately, despite the elegant and persuasive note on which Patterson wraps

up his book—evoking what Alexis de Tocqueville called “that strange melancholy which oftentimes will haunt the inhabitants of democratic countries in the midst of their abundance, and that disgust at life which sometimes seizes upon them in the midst of calm and easy circumstances”—we would do well to remember that the comparative placidity of 2000 represented only a moment, in no way guaranteed to last. Should the harsh tone of public life today continue, history may come to view the late 20th century's political struggles not as the relatively inconsequential indulgence of a comfortable people but as a prologue to an extended phase of division, fear, and alienation. **TAP**

David Greenberg is a professor of media studies and history at Rutgers University and the author of Nixon's Shadow: The History of an Image. He is writing a biography of Calvin Coolidge for the American Presidents Series from Henry Holt.

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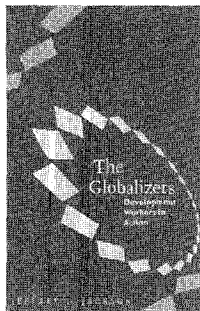
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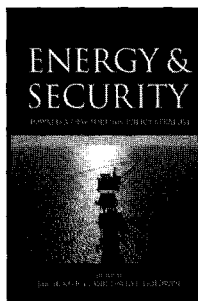
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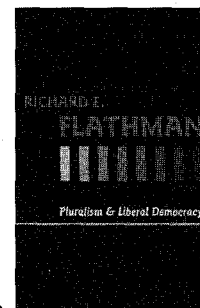
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The Paradox Explained

BY ROBERT B. REICH

HOW CAN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION BE SO DISCIPLINED and effective at politics and so undisciplined and ineffectual at governing? No White House in living memory has been as successful at squelching leaks and keeping cabinet members on message, reaching

down into the bureaucracy to bend analyses in directions that support its goals, imposing its will on congressional leaders of the same party, and even making a political imprint on state legislatures. No recent president has been re-elected with controlling majorities in both chambers of Congress, or been as successful at repositioning the national debate around his ideological worldview.

Yet just as remarkable is this White House's incompetence in doing the work of governing the nation. Its stunning failures to act on predictions of a terrorist attack like September 11 or a natural disaster like Hurricane Katrina; its botched intelligence over Saddam Hussein's supposed weapons of mass destruction; its failure to secure order after invading Iraq; its shameful treatment of prisoners of war; its fiscal profligacy; its bizarre Medicare drug benefit, from which the elderly are now fleeing; its incapacity to run the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)—the list goes on. Not since the hapless administration of Warren G. Harding has there been one so stunningly inept.

The easy answer to the paradox is that George W. Bush cares about winning elections and putting his ideological stamp on the nation, but doesn't give a hoot about governing the place. But that's no explanation, because the two are so obviously connected. An administration can't impose a lasting stamp without being managed well, and a president's party can't keep winning elections if the

public thinks it's composed of idiots.

The real answer is that the same discipline and organization that's made the White House into a hugely effective political machine has impaired its capacity to govern. Blocking data that's inconsistent with the desired ideological outcome may be effective politics in the short term. It keeps the media and the opposition party at bay. But it also prevents top policy-makers from ever getting the quality of information they need. Operatives in the CIA suspected Hussein didn't have weapons of mass destruction, and personnel at the State Department knew the plan to invade Iraq was seriously flawed. But such judgments were suppressed by a White House that made perfectly clear what it wanted—and didn't want—to hear. Career professionals at the CIA and the State Department are now wary of sharing what they know with appointed officials, as are scientists and experts all over the federal government.

Similarly, a White House whose cabinet officers all deliver identical, positive lines can be a formidable message machine. But this same discipline also discourages internal dissent, for the simple reason that in Washington, nothing stays completely private. The predictable result

is that Bush officials have become yes-men incapable of sounding alarms. The price of dissent is high. Soon after Glenn Hubbard, then the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, warned that the cost of the Iraq War would be in the range of \$200 billion—almost exactly what it's cost so far—he was fired. After Paul O'Neill, then the secretary of the Treasury, worried out loud that federal budget deficits didn't seem to matter any longer—a prescient concern—he was eased out, too. Can it be any wonder why this president doesn't seem to get it?

Political discipline is also honed when the White House staffs agencies with people loyal to the president, along with loyalists' friends. Joe Allbaugh worked as W's chief of staff when the latter was Texas governor, and as his 2000 campaign manager, so it seemed perfectly natural to put Allbaugh's college buddy Michael Brown in charge of FEMA—even though "Brownie" had no previous experience in disaster management. FEMA's acting deputy director and its acting deputy chief of staff had no relevant experience, either; both had been advance men in the White House. Given this, no one should be surprised that FEMA so badly bungled Katrina. The

administration is still crawling with cronies who know their politics but don't have a clue what they're supposed to manage.

Politics first, competence last—that's the Bush administration all over. Karl Rove, Bush's brain and deputy chief of staff, is in charge of the political juggernaut that's substituted for effective governance. Presumably, he's now

at work on a plan to burnish the image of Republicans as managers of the public's business so they don't get the hell beaten out of them in the midterms a year from now. But the harder Rove works at spinning what this White House has accomplished, the more likely it is that Americans will see that what it has accomplished is basically spin. **TAP**

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that's made the
White House
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ability to govern.*

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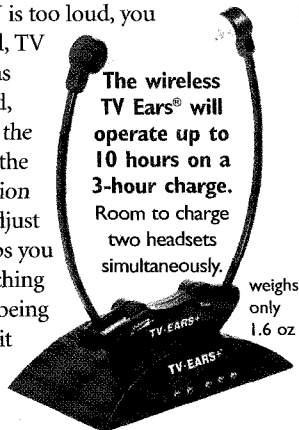
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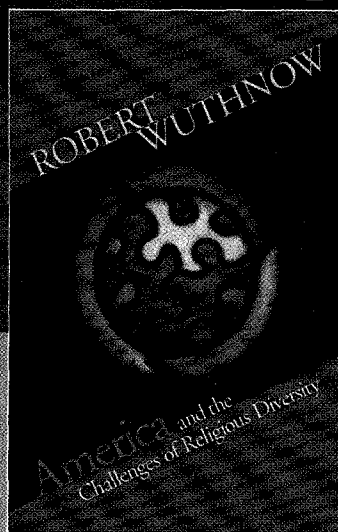
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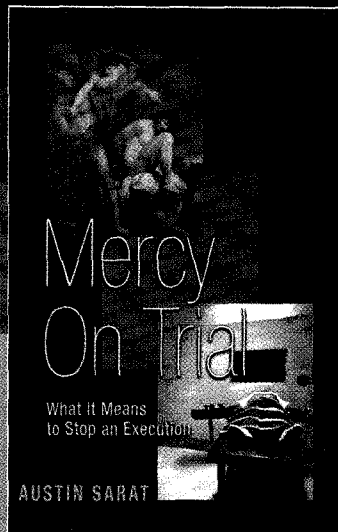
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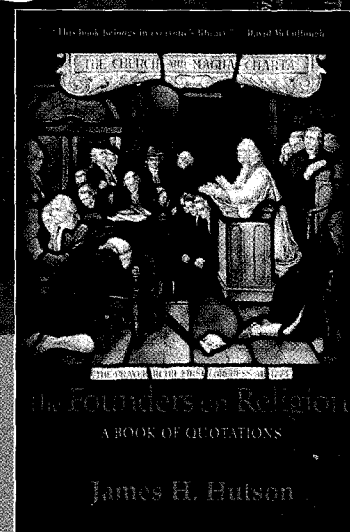
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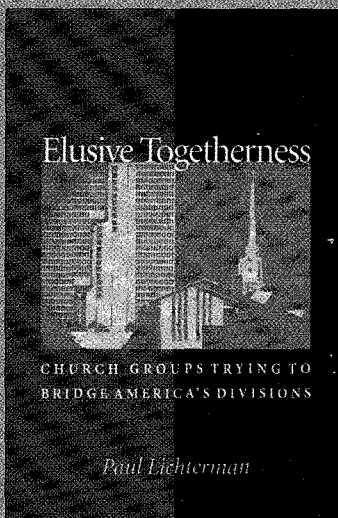
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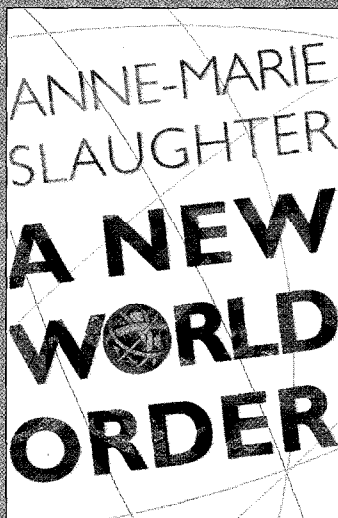
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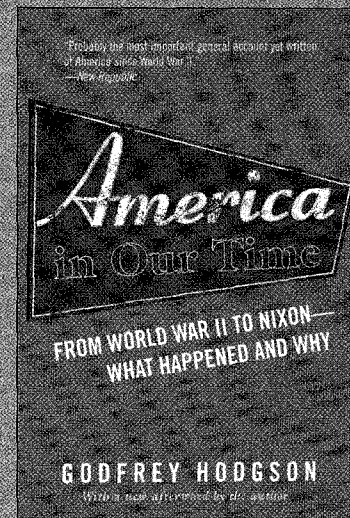
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